

FEBRUARY 2011 VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

POETS/ARTISTS

Grace Cavalieri Interviews

Rita Dove

Photos by Fred Viebahn

Also in this issue

Michael O'Keefe

Tracey Stuckey

Melissa Cooke

Victor Wang

and more...

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publishing as an art form

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Judith Peck

www.judithpeck.net

Judith Peck has made it her life's work to paint about the history and healing of social injustice. More than just a painter, she is an advocate – raising awareness through each and every brushstroke.

Her work has been exhibited in venues nationwide, including the International Arts & Artists' Hillyer Arts Space in Washington, D.C., the Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta, GA and the Rhonda Schaller Studio in New York City. Her work has also been featured in a numerous publications, such as Ori Soltes' book *The Ashen Rainbow*, the San Francisco City Concert Opera Orchestra's announcement for "Die Weisse Rose" and the John Rawls' Theory of Justice conference announcement for the College of New Jersey.

In December 2010 she participated in Red Dot Art Fair at Art Basel in Miami, Florida and was juried into the National Small Works Painting Show at The Main Street Gallery in Groton, New York in which she won the Juror's #2 award. She was also juried into the upcoming Contemporary Art Center of Virginia's New Waves 2011 show.

Judith Peck holds a degree in Fine Arts from the George Washington University in Washington, D.C.



Do you have a ritual you follow before each new work is started?

I am not a ritual kind- of person. I did not attend any of my graduations, and my wedding ceremony was private. However, each time I start a new painting, I always begin with clean brushes and a fresh pallet.

What is your pet peeve regarding today's art scene?

Art is truly all about individual expression. As an artist, you are encouraged from the very start to always explore this notion, regardless of the inevitable critique, criticism, or misunderstanding. I get very disappointed when I see members within the art community abandoning this principle, demonstrating a lack of appreciation for work that is personal. This does not show any real love of art. You should read every piece of art and give it a little bit of time, even those that challenge you, because the artist has put his or her heart and soul into it. Even more concerning is when this complexity seeps into the hands of those who dictate the relationship between artists and the public. By only celebrating work from a select group of genres, they are limiting the public's exposure and ability to think willingly, and more tragically, their opportunity for personal and interpersonal growth.

How does family life come into play with your artistic life?

Having a family presented some challenges to my identity as an artist. I put my brushes down for about five years when my children were young. It was difficult to devote the time and energy required of my work while they remained dependent. Conversely, the dedication that I give to my family, and the experiences resulting from these deep, profound relationships has informed who I am as a person, and of course, as an artist. Now I expect more from myself and of my work.

How have social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and others come into play with your art?

Social networks have exposed me to so many wonderful artists and people I would have never previously known. We approach each other like old friends, sharing technique and celebrating accomplishments. As a result, my exposure within the art world has grown exponentially.

How has digital accessibility come into play with your work?

The Internet gives me something very precious: time. I am able to spend more moments alongside my work – assessing and contemplating each canvas - before sharing it with the world. I can paint up to the very last second, then enter digital photographs of damp paintings into shows and galleries with the very click of a mouse.

What is your preferred medium and why?

I am a traditional painter; I use oil and glazing to create a luminous image. I have always been interested in the materials and methods demonstrated by the masters, so the relationship I share with paint developed quite naturally. I love the way paint smells and feels, the way it reacts to a properly primed gessoed support – penetrating the material with every bountiful color.

Do you collect any art yourself and if so what, if anything, was the first piece you sold or gave to someone?

I have developed quite the art assortment. My collection celebrates a variety of genres, from both near and far. Nonetheless, my most cherished pieces remain those created by my family and friends. The first piece I ever sold

was a landscape; the subject of my studies while under the instruction of William Woodward at the George Washington University.

Have you ever edited your work or censored anything for fear of offending someone?

I paint pieces that have a difficult subject matter, but instead of being fearful of offending someone, I hope to enlighten them. However, I understand that sometime my work may not be appropriate for the venue. I trust and respect the curator role in making these decisions. For example, I sent a kind- of nude once, not a full- on nude, but a partial nude, for a rather large and prominent show. The painting was part of a greater collection that was earlier accepted for display. In spite of this, when I went to see the show on opening night, I found my piece hidden away in the closet.

What tool or supply can you not live/work without?

I am a brush abuser. I throw them on the floor, misplace them, and of course, cover them entirely in paint. I am not one of those artists who meticulously squeeze the paint tube from the bottom each and every time. I clean my brushes with 'Chroma Incredible Brush Cleaner' it is the best product I have ever used. Every time I find a place that carries it, I clean out their stock with the intention of sharing my personal wealth with friends. But, without a doubt, I always end up hoarding it all for myself. I do not think I could stand to give a single bottle away.

Do you believe art should serve a political purpose or remain neutral?

If you are a sensitive person and are expressing yourself, it would be almost impossible to create art that does not comment on the world around you. Most of my work is about exploring the raw issues surrounding circumstances of social injustice. I believe that art has the ability to profoundly touch an audience.

What painting do you have hanging in your living room?

How could I possibly choose just one? I have a mixed media piece by Manuela Holban titled, *The Guess*, a self- portrait by Katherine Janus Kahn and a Chinese calligraphy precept that my father- in- law, Hun Kim, created. I also like to keep a continuously changing collection of four to five of my newest pieces around.

How long does one of your pieces take to finish?

It depends entirely on the piece, and it is hard to be definitive because I rarely work in a linear pattern. I prefer to jump between paintings, moving back and forth, starting a new while finishing the next. I find this process quite invigorating.

Explain your process.

I like to begin with a hypothesis, like John Rawls' *Theory of the Ignorance*, or, something else that I just cannot get off my mind. This stimulus is what helps to guide my passion as a painter. I then either discover a model, or create a composite from memory and photographic reference. Although using a model is my preferred method, the negation of one does not hinder my practice. Even when I have a model, I am never really painting the model – I am painting the concept. The most integral part of my process as an artist is what occurs next, the struggle of discovery. This is the time where I allow my mind to be less controlling, making way for my intuition to take over. It can be a battle of will, a rollercoaster of emotions, where I find myself worrying over the work even outside of the studio. It is amazing that I still subject myself to this after so many years, but I believe that my art is ultimately at its very best when it lacks routine.

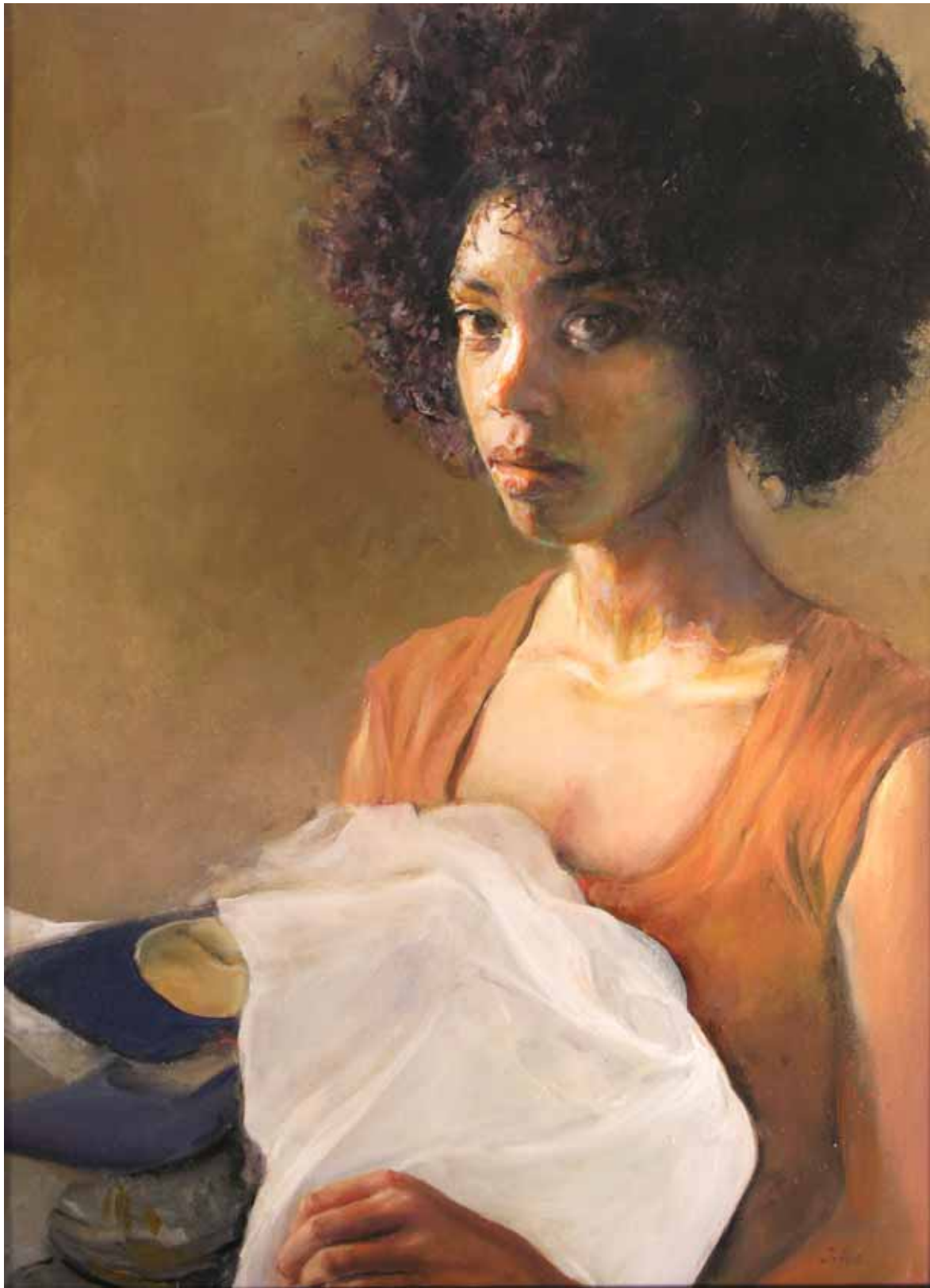




Veiled Conscience oil on linen 24"x18"



“The people in my paintings have overcome tremendous difficulties, yet, remain unbowed. Resilient and unaffected, these individuals are proof that it is possible to summon great strength from within a hushed sense of self-distinction. The human spirit remains unyielding in the eyes of the subject—an essence of humanity uniting us all.” Judith Peck



INTROSPECTIVE: *Veiled Judgment*

While working on a series for a one-person show, I created the painting *Veiled Judgment*. The painting just spoke to me, so I felt it was only fitting to put it on the opening night invitation. It was luminous, yet, simple, and most importantly, expressive of the show's subject matter without illustrating its content. However, the more I lived with this painting, the more obvious its deficiencies became. You can easily become blind to the work sometimes because you are so acclimated to it, but when you step away and then come

back; you get a shock of objectivity. I felt that there was something lacking in the gaze, the inner life and soul of the very concept I was portraying. An artist friend offered the advice of beginning a new piece as an opportunity to step away from my dissatisfaction. I began to paint a little study, one that I was quite pleased with. It actually even won second prize in a portrait competition. Nonetheless, no matter how much I tried to step away from *Veiled Judgment*, the more I began itching to change it. I finally sanded off the face, and from that very moment, there was no looking back.

Heather Bell

And If You Are Sad Enough

And if indeed you are sad enough-
if your backache feels like it has a tiny
broken heart-
if your topography of sadness is littered with
your mother's tired feet
and your father's poison oak-

if you have found your natural home
is a handful of caught white fish-
if the scent of the earth
is body and cave-

now is the time to stock up
on canned goods like a
survivor. To place foliage in your hat
to fool the animals. Now

is the time to take your grandfather's
ventilator and attach it to your
throat to give
breath where there is none.

Now, take your rage and your
scarlet fever. Take your beautiful piano

and transplanted pig's
heart and place them all

in a basket. And if indeed you are sad enough,

push this basket far down
a river as if it were food moving
slowly past the teeth and

if you are sad enough,
you will hear it cry, quietly,
and suck greedily
on its fingers.

Heather Bell's work has been recently published in Rattle, Grasslimb, Barnwood and Third Wednesday, to name only a few. She has been recently nominated for the 2009 Pushcart Prize from Rattle and also won the New Letter 2009 Poetry Prize. Heather has published four books. Three of these books are currently sold out and out of print, but her latest book is still available here: <http://anhingamagazine.blogspot.com/>

Alex Schmidt

Democratic Monster

I don't read books.
I can never finish them, I usually
end up eating them first.

Let's press play already
before I eat the movie too.
I hear it's a good one,
the guy dies at the end. And no,
I didn't spoil it for you.
I didn't tell you how.

Does he get eaten whole?
Does it start with a nibble leading
to Exsanguination?
Don't worry, you'll see.

Speaking of food, if you want popcorn,
it's located in the white cabinet
left of the white fridge,
hidden behind the sugared tissue paper.
The popcorn's old, so feel free
to have the paper instead.
It's one of my favorite snacks.
Some people don't have the stomach for it.

Oh, that's right, I'm sorry,
the fridge is no longer there, right?
Yeah, my mother took it this morning
to share with her kindergarten class.
Voracious little twerps, she calls them.

Oh, and the cabinet too.
I'm sorry, I can't help it.
She took that for a snack
kind of in a rush this morning.

White things apparently carry more nutrients.
I hear they richen the green
of our toe nails.
A sign of health.

What is with all these previews.
This is taking forever.
They don't even have an attractive
smell.

Now I have to go to the bathroom.
It might be a while.
Please, go ahead and unplug the washing machine.
I'll be hungry when I emerge.

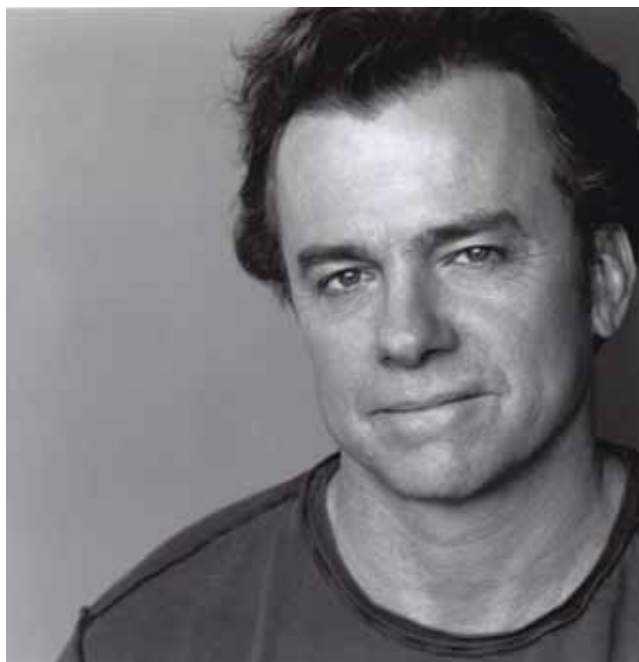
Alex Schmidt graduated from Columbia College Chicago with a poetry degree. He currently attends Queens University of Charlotte, en route to attaining an MFA in Creative Writing, Poetry. He just moved last spring to Charlotte from Chicago (where he was born and raised). He has worked for Trader Joe's in Chicago since 2003, and continues to in Charlotte. He will probably be there for a while, unless of course, poetry and money become synonymous. Yet, if this were the case, he would probably quit poetry and begin his long awaited wish to melt into the universe, literally spiritually. He is over two years married to a beautiful wife, with one dog and two cats. One can find another poem of his (titled *The Way*) in the sixth volume of Buffalo Carp, a Quad City Arts publication.

Grace Cavalieri Interviews

Michael O'Keefe

Michael O'Keefe is an actor, poet, and lyricist. His new book of poems is *Swimming From Under My Father*, Noble Swine Press. Michael has had nominations for both the Golden Globe and the Academy Award. We remember him from films *Michael Clayton* and *Caddy Shack* (among others) and as "Fred" on the TV show *Roseanne* (among others.) He wrote the lyrics for the Grammy-award-winning song, "Longing in their Hearts," composed and recorded by Bonnie Raitt. He has an MFA from Bennington College and is currently at work on a novel.

In his own words "I became a Zen student in 1986. Prior to that I'd read a great deal about it. Authors like Kerouac and Ginsberg captured my imagination with their style and fascination with Buddhism. Straight Dharma books always caught my eye as well and I read a fair amount before finding a teacher. At the time my career was on a downswing and my love life had fallen apart. I knew I needed something to get me moving in a positive direction. On old friend, John Miller, a bassist and musical contractor in NYC, took me to an Introduction to Zen Practice at the Zen Community of New York (ZCNY) for my thirty-first birthday. I never looked back."



Grace Cavalieri: *When was the most recent time you felt elated in reading a poem?*

Michael O'Keefe: I'm not sure if elation is what I'm looking for when I read poetry. Transcendence is important to me. Surprise, in the sense of unusual metaphor or simile, or even plot, if the poem is narrative, is another thing I read poetry for. Maybe I'm not looking for elation because I'm kind of a sad sack type. Well, that's not really true but your question has provoked a question in me. Why don't I look for elation in poetry? And my answer is: "Um, I dunno."

GC: *If being on stage is to occupy an illusion, is poetry the opposite of illusion or another kind?*

MO: One way to look at acting is to, "occupy an illusion" as you say. Many actors I know are interested in poetry. (See the book I edited with Jason Shinder entitled, *The Poem I Turn To*, an anthology of favorite poems of people in the movie and TV business) but the suggestion that poetry is the opposite of illusion, if that is indeed what theater and film are, implies that the latter lack a kind of substance that poetry has. Perhaps that's true of most of the fodder that passes for art in the commercial world of TV, film and theater but there are exceptions in that world. For me, both acting and poetry must be rooted in some kind of reality before they can be elevated, or elevate themselves, into an art form. So the question is what's real about what actors

and poets do? And the answer is everything. Everything that they are doing must be real, at least, they must embrace reality in some part of their process. That's what gets them past their audience's skepticism. And that takes a certain sleight of hand. Presto Chango: what's real for the artist is now real for you. So, yeah, they are both real, not real, and neither real nor not real, as we say in Zen. Deconstructed enough for you?

GC: *When was the first time you felt "Life will never be the same?"*

MO: Probably when I figured out what sex was about. As far as poetry is concerned: see Rilke's, "Archaic Torso of Apollo." Best last line in a poem. Ever. "You must change your life." Of course, alone that's not so poetic. But juxtaposed against the brilliance of what precedes it:

*Otherwise this stone would seem defaced
beneath the translucent cascade of the shoulders
and would not glisten like a wild beast's fur:
would not, from all the borders of itself,
burst like a star: for here there is no place
that does not see you. You must change your life.*
That is some righteous shit.

GC: *What is the greatest pleasure you remember from your childhood memory?*

MO: Three Musketeers bars, Flash comics, and see my first reply to the previous question.

GC: *Why did you decide to study poetry in academia, rather than writing and reading on your own?*

MO: I was reading *Poets on the Peaks* in 2003 and burst into tears when I realized I really wanted to be a writer when I was young but got side tracked by acting. My friend, poet Terrence Winch, suggested I apply to a graduate program.

GC: *What does poetry forgive?*

MO: Does poetry forgive? I don't know about that. Perhaps it can lead us to an insight that will allow us to forgive ourselves our trespasses. I mean, why do we pray to have them forgiven in the first place? And since I'm not certain there is a God to forgive us I'm not certain that poetry can. Either someone forgives us or we forgive others and ourselves. But poetry does neither.

GC: *What elementary school teacher offered you a kindness?*

MO: My fifth grade teacher, a nun at St. Augustine's Grammar School, gave me part of her peanut butter and jelly sandwich once. That was nice.

GC: *What is the favorite role you've performed in film or on stage?*

MO: I like the ones where I get paid.

GC: *How does music overcome loneliness?*

MO: Now, that's the first question you've asked that I have no argument with. Music does overcome loneliness, doesn't it? Why? Probably because composers articulate something, as Charles Simic once pointed out about poetry, that was inconspicuous in its familiarity until the composer revealed it. Sondheim, Paul Simon, Patty Griffin, to name just a few, find the most amazing things to say in music that are so relevant, real, and once articulated, obviously about Life with a capital "L." How could you be lonely when they can take up all the space around you, if only for a few minutes?

GC: *How is the poet in you different from the songwriter?*

MO: To be precise, I'm a lyricist. I can't write music. At least, I can't write music that anyone, including me, wants to listen to. And there's a world of difference between poetry and lyricism, though they are related. Poems have to stand on their own, and have no music, other than the music they create in the reader while reading. So in that sense, poetry is a bit more difficult than lyric writing. But not by much. They're both difficult but poetry is even more so. Goddam it.

GC: *If you were not an artist, what occupation would you find fulfilling?*

MO: Recently I thought about getting a degree in law, specializing in Indian law, and working towards giving North America back to the Indians. We've messed it up so badly I'm not certain we, and by we I mean "Americans," should be the steward of this land. I figured something like that might keep me busy. I mean, I'd never run out of opportunities to point out just how bad a job we're doing. Though I do like baseball, jazz, New Orleans and one or two other things about the USA.

GC: *What do you want from your poetry?*

MO: I want to be able to articulate something about being alive, about my life, and about life in general, that I can't say another way. And I want a pony. Is it too late to ask for that?

GC: *What do you treasure on a daily basis?*

MO: My girlfriend, Emily.

GC: *Describe the most wonderful place you've ever lived.*

MO: No way. Then other people would find out about it and want to move there.

GC: *Did you have to throw away the suit you wore on the copy of your book *Swimming Under My Father* or just get it dried and cleaned?*

MO: Amazingly, no. Of course, I wasn't wearing pants so I had that going for me.

Dirk Dzimirsky

www.dzimirsky.com



Dirk Dzimirsky is a self taught artist, born 1969 in Rhede, Germany. He has been drawing since his earliest childhood, but although doing commissioned portraits as a sideline throughout his life, he never saw himself as an artist and only in 2007 he finally started to focus solely on his art.

In 2008 he was commissioned to write and illustrate a drawing book, published in Germany. In 2009 the American Artist Drawing magazine published an article about Dirk's work. Since then his work has appeared in magazines all around the globe.

His works are in private collection in Europe and the USA. He had his first solo show in 2009 in Germany and since 2010 he exhibit his work internationally.

Dirk currently lives and works in Bocholt, Germany.



The Sofa pencil on grey paper, heightened with white 25.2"x16.5"



Amalgam pencil on grey paper, heightened with white 25"x17"

Q&A Dirk Dzimirsky

Explain your process.

I take photos as the basis of my drawings. Sometimes I have a specific idea, sometimes only a vague idea of a constellation or sometimes I just meet with someone and take photos that might trigger an idea for a work later. After browsing through the photos later and choosing one I then decide on the best size and format for it and the materials I want to use. That depends on the mood and the "look" I want to have for the image. If I want to emphasize the light structures I often choose toned paper or canvas so that I can draw the light with white charcoal or pastel directly. I really take my time to study the photo and listen to what it tells me, what I could do with it and to where I can take it. It's processing the image into a new concept.

I draw with a general to specific approach, always working on the image as a whole. Everything must work together and reacts to another, that's why I don't work on isolated areas or draw my way down from top left to bottom right. I work in many layers and stages. Within each layer or stage I deal only with a certain amount of details or certain aspects like tonal values, so that it usually feels more like sketching

and the sum of all these layers finally result in a highly detail outcome. I may use 10 to 20 layers or more in a drawing on paper while with charcoal on canvas I often use only 2 or 3 layers for a given area as charcoal is so different than graphite.

Do you have a ritual you follow before each new work is started?

Before I start a new project I study my reference photo thoroughly, like a pianist might go through his music sheets, and envision myself drawing it. That helps to identify what materials might work best for the image I have in mind. And with every new drawing I use to change something material-wise or technically. These changes can be as small as using one different pencil brand but, as I live in a kind of micro world within the bounding area of the drawing surface, these changes can be huge and even lead to complete failure.

What is your preferred medium and why?

I like to draw with charcoal on prepared canvas. I prepare the canvas myself with a mixture of pastel ground and acrylic color to get a toned surface. The texture of the canvas is really rough and I have to rub the charcoal quite



Deja-Vu

pencil on
paper

16.5"x16.5"

heavily into it with stumps or tissues but that forces me to concentrate more on the tonality of the image and suggesting details more through textures instead of rendering them painstakingly. It is a more intuitive way of drawing. It also feels much closer to sculpting the image than the more detailed drawing on paper on a smaller scale.

Have you ever edited your work or censored anything for fear of offending someone?

When I was doing commissions I learned pretty soon that you have to edit the image. If you stick to the truth it is interesting to see that people can be offended by their own face. Today I don't have to considerate that but still edit a lot but for other purposes.

What tool or supply can you not live/work without?

My father once build a 45 degree book stand for my mother to put cook books on it while cooking. But she never used it because it was a bit too large for our small kitchen. So I had used it as a drawing board since I was a teenager and still use it today although adjustable drawing desks or table easels would be much more practical. But nonetheless I have done practically all my drawings on paper on that old book stand.

How has digital accessibility come into play with your work?

Since I was a teenager I used to take photos. Unfortunately the number you could take was very limited, it took a week or more to have them developed and most often all the photos came out useless as I never was a good photographer. Today I can take unlimited photos (and often do) and have them immediately available. Using a digital camera today is just freaking fun for me. The first digital camera I used for several years made really noisy and blurry photos but those bad photos helped me to develop as an artist because to be able to "read" those photos and use them you must had developed a lot of theoretically knowledge, a sense of form and learn not to stick to your photo reference too much.

How long does one of your pieces take to finish?

I am working on quite a lot of pieces at a time, so the actual time spent on one piece is hard to tell. The total working time might be between 30 and 60 hours depending on the complexity of details and the choosen material. Charcoal drawings on canvas are quicker done than the more detailed but much smaller drawings on paper.



The Letter charcoal on canvas 55.1"x39.4"



Frozen charcoal on canvas 47.2" x 39.4"

"I choose drawing over painting as this allows me to create many layers over layers of lines and dots which react to each other in order to create a vibrant texture with directions and movement. This approach enables the finished work to be viewed more by the "senses" as opposed to the standard visual observation of a photo."

Dirk Dzimirsky



Lemonworld pencil on grey paper, heightened with white 18.5"x18.5"

INTROSPECTIVE: *Lemonworld*

I drew this piece on middle grey paper, using graphite pencils and a black color pencil for shading and a white charcoal pencil for the lights. For the background I used only graphite pencils in the range of 3B to 7B.

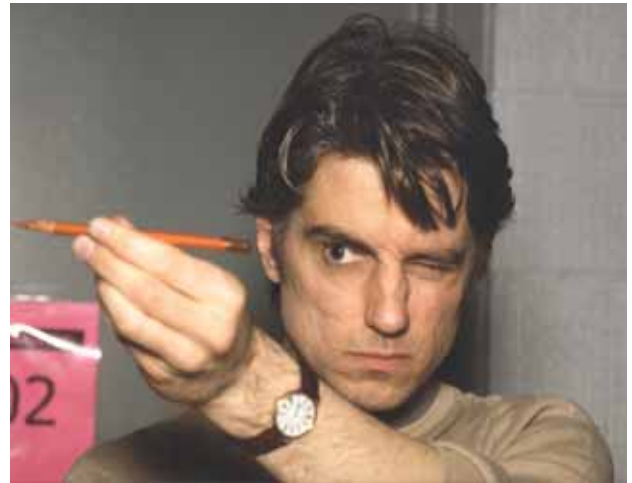
I wanted to have a very big contrast between the girls in the foreground and the background to really separate them from each other. I wanted to keep the background very vague and kinda naive and only as defined as necessary to still work within the context to keep the attention of the viewer on the girls. I improvised the background based on one of my holiday snapshots. I liked the idea that the background could be a (sad version) of a kid's drawing and the girls posing in front of it or something they do not belong to. There is actually a story to the girls and I think it is readable in this drawing.

Dirk Dzimirsky



Douglas Malone

Isolation, Solitude and Detachment



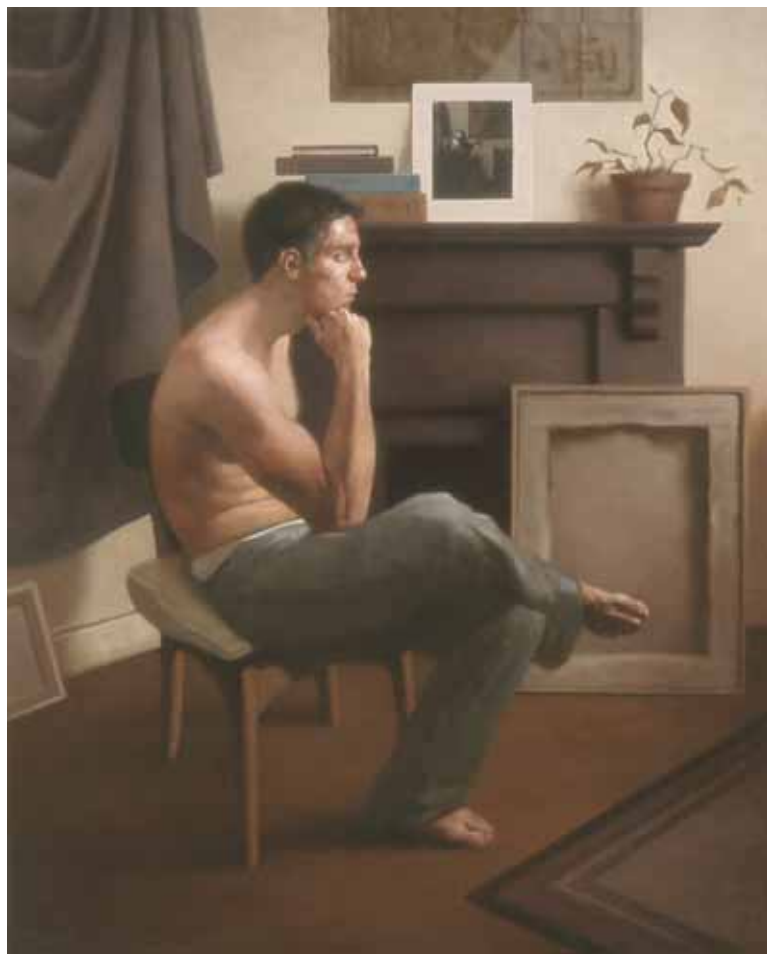
DOUGLAS MALONE states 'Thematically, my work is rooted in the existential unease which arises from a deep and abiding sense of isolation and detachment.' But the first impression when viewing these paintings of primarily men, or *Everyman*, is one of profound admiration for the quality of composition and fluent technique that seem to flow so naturally from his brush. The sense of representation is so secure that the viewer may appropriately assume that Malone's models are of a similar ilk –solemn, motionless, not concerned with the outside world, but instead locked away in some meditative state. And if several models are used, then they appear as tropes, so similar are they in body habitus, skin texture, and even clothing, raising the question as to whether the models are in studio or simply in the painter's mind.

Closer inspection, or perhaps prolonged exposure to these paintings, suggests that the very questions regarding the 'model' are inconsequential. What Douglas Malone places on the canvas with such virtuosity is not a collection of creatures with whom

Back Study 24"x18"



Arrangement with Figure #3 30"x40"



Sunday Neurosis 30"x24"

“It is not physical solitude that actually separates one from others; not physical isolation, but spiritual isolation. It is not the desert island nor the stony wilderness that cuts you from the people you love. It is the wilderness in the mind, the desert wastes in the heart through which one wanders lost and a stranger. When one is a stranger to oneself then one is estranged from others too. If one is out of touch with oneself, then one cannot touch others. How often in a large city, shaking hands with my friends, I have felt the wilderness stretching between us. Both of us were wandering in arid wastes, having lost the springs that nourished us — or having found them dry. Only when one is connected to one’s own core is one connected to others, I am beginning to discover. And, for me, the core, the inner spring, can best be refound through solitude.”

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

we can specifically identify, but instead these forms are intended to be ambiguous, reflections of the artist’s own inner sense of detachment and isolation: by concentrating on formal issues of design, composition, anatomic credulity, and color palette Malone creates a timelessness that negates the need for further ‘identifying’ the meaning of the finished canvas. ‘My paintings, while “realistic,” are not simply depictions of recognizable imagery, but are carefully-arranged formal constructions or “ordered systems” in which all the pictorial elements

are deliberately designed to satisfy my own sense of balance and harmony.’

One would expect that an artist with these thought constructs might live a life of seclusion, recreating the solitude of his finished art. But Douglas Malone teaches his craft, in the past at the Academy of Art in San Francisco and currently at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, Michigan, instructing, observing, and sharing his philosophical views with students. After attending college at the College of William and Mary he studied art at both

The Corcoran School of Art and the Academy of Art in San Francisco. Embracing classicism he concentrates on incorporating the ideas and techniques of the giants of the past such as Rembrandt, Caravaggio, and Vermeer as well as contemporary classical painters like Lucian Freud, and from these seeds grow his own unique fusion of painterly precision and philosophical pondering.

Malone's polished appreciation of anatomy and the influence of the classical form are well defined in his works such as **Back Study** – a work that could easily find companionship in textbooks created to study the human form. But these paintings, fine though they are, are only introductions of sorts to the creations that dominate Malone's output. In **Arrangement with Figure #3** Malone's passion for formalism is well defined: the figure is precisely painted but is seeming equal to the other aspects of the painting – the books, the presence of canvases turned from our view, the mystery of the shadowed painting on the wall –all contribute to the meditative sense of the painting. When the artist places two or more figures in the confines of a painting, as in the oddly enigmatic **Conjoined** or even the wonderfully strange **Procession #2**, the figures do not seem to be in communication other than the sharing of the disarmingly quiet space. And all of the elements that concern the paintings of Douglas Malone –anatomic observation, carefully arranged formal or ordered systems in which all of the pictorial elements are deliberately designed to satisfy his sense of balance and harmony appear to step forward in the possibly 'self portrait' appearing **Sunday Neurosis**.

What Douglas Malone offers is a marriage of painting and existential philosophy. Time spent with his paintings invites the viewer into that meditative state, offering instead of stories or narrations, solace from a world of chaos.




ABOVE: *Procession #2* 40"x40"

BELOW: *Conjoined* 30"x30"



Terri Thomas

www.territhomasart.com



Born in Detroit, Michigan, a lifelong interest in art became the grounds for Terri Thomas' pursuit of a career in the fashion industry. Over time she became progressively more concerned with the commoditization of beauty, the industry's emphasis on physical perfection and society's obsession with achieving this standard. Soon she was unable to decipher if her work in fashion was empowering or if it was contributing to a growing contemporary problem.

In 2001, Terri decided to give up her 15-year career in fashion and pursue an art degree. She graduated from Corcoran College of Art & Design with honors in 2004. Influenced by the work of artists like Cindy Sherman, Douglas Gordon, Jenny Saville, Marc Quinn, Jeff Koons and Vanessa Beecroft, Terri's work with large-scale, cinematic painting, sculpture, photography and video challenges preconceptions about beauty, femininity and sexuality and explores how the utopian promises of the media both feed and reconcile anxieties about the self. Her work has been shown in multiple group and solo exhibitions throughout the country. The artist is represented by Lyons Wier Gallery in Chelsea, New York and she currently lives and works in Austin, Texas.



LEFT:

The Watchful

Swarovski crystals,
paper mache, plaster,
adhesive over foam
form

RIGHT:

Hedone

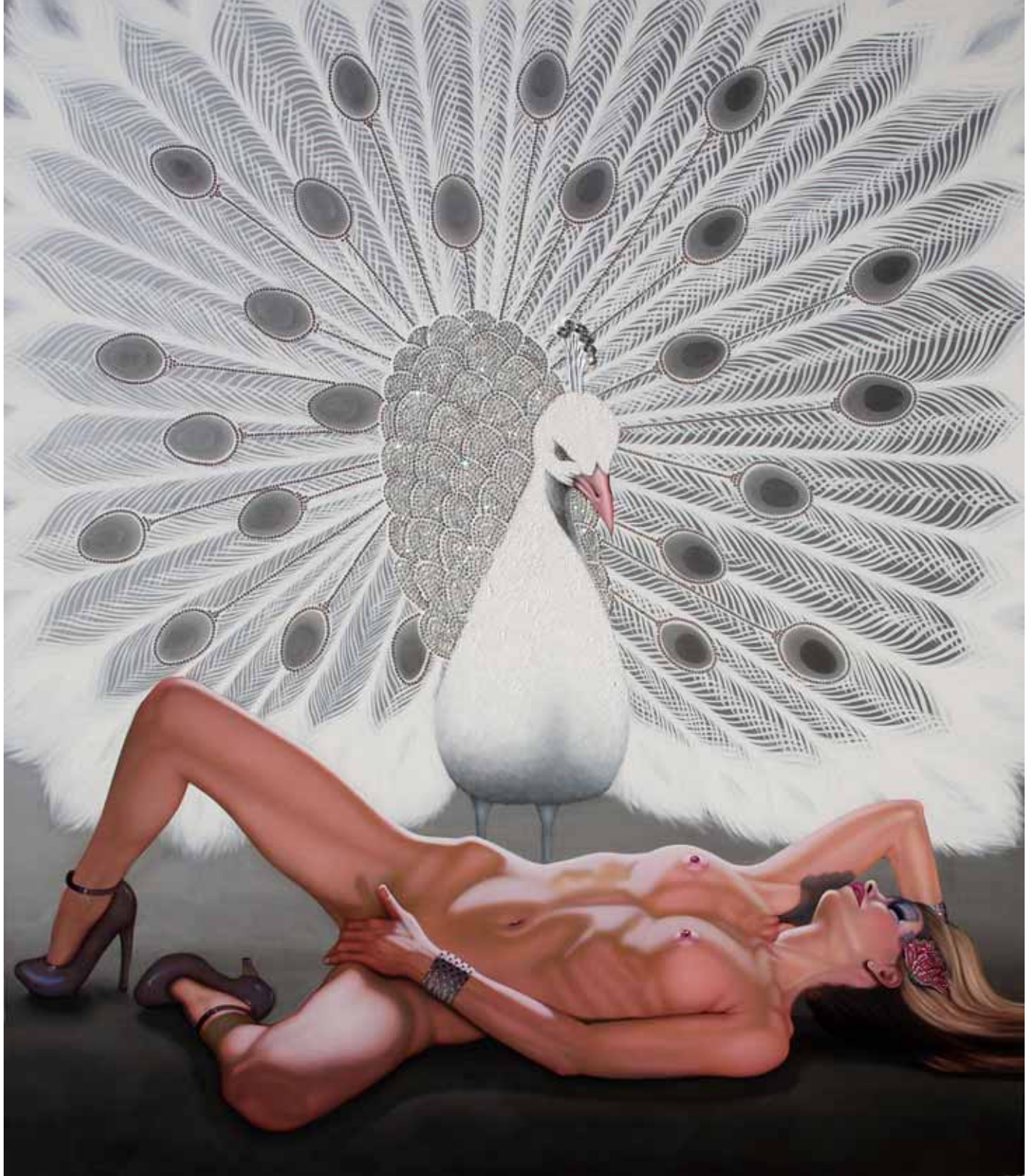
Swarovski crystals and
oil on canvas
72"x64"

BELOW:

Folie A Deux

Swarovski crystals,
glass beads, antlers,
glass eyes, paper
mache, plaster
adhesive over foam
forms.





“As a twin I grew up feeling a disparity between who I was in contrast to the societal expectations created by the media’s over-sexualized, stereotyped and iconic portrayals of the double. Combined with a background in the fashion industry, I became interested in how we are conditioned to desire, identify with and be informed by the media.

Through self-replication, portrait paintings, sculpture and video that reference mythology, cultural fascination, art history and consumerism, my work is autobiographical and explores notions of mimicry, femininity, sexuality and mortality.”

Terri Thomas



Trinity Swarovski crystals and oil on canvas 64"x84"

Q&A Terri Thomas

Do you have a ritual you follow before each new work is started?

It depends on the work. Sometimes I engage in play without much thought. When collecting objects sometimes it's not until years later that I know what to do with them. Or with my photography, I usually get an idea but sometimes the orchestration, dressing up and staging myself can feel daunting. So, I try to keep the prep as spontaneous as possible so I don't kill the moment. Sometimes the photos end up as works themselves; mostly they become source material for a future project. With bigger works, I do feel a need to organize before I begin. It helps when I'm working on several pieces at the same time. It keeps me motivated. I've started setting up various work areas. It allows me the freedom to go 'station to station' to work on what I perceive to be the least difficult or most fun thing first. I've learned that if I think this way, then all of it – even a more intimidating project becomes easier, more enjoyable and I accomplish more in a day.

If anything, what was the first piece you sold or gave to someone?

Giving stuff away is always something that I've done. But

my first sale happened the night of my senior thesis exhibit. My show consisted of 5 large canvases installed as a continuum, altogether in a horizontal line like a film strip. In each realistic figurative painting, I depicted double self-portraiture that was attempting to simultaneously express personal narratives, power relations, verisimilitude and sexual cliché. The installation as a whole, being read from end to end conveyed dichotomous aspects such as the private/public, fantasy/reality, revealed/concealed, One and the Other. Anyway, a dear friend of mine from one of my painting classes had apparently been secretly conspiring with her husband regarding my work. They came to my show and then called me directly after and offered me a very respectful amount of money for one of the paintings. I guess you could say that from the start, they established my market value. But most importantly, I was honored and I felt incredibly fortunate to feel their strong belief in me and their deep appreciation of the work.

Do you collect any art yourself and if so what?

I think every artist is a collector in a way. I know my studio is overflowing with artist interviews, postcards and reproductions of my favorites. But over the last several years, it started to feel really important to *buy* art. It feels like a way to keep my creative universe circulating... I think of



Foundlings Swarovski crystals and oil on canvas 58"x90"

collecting as sort of an artistic-tithing. Whenever I acquire a piece, I instantly feel reward on many levels... the obvious thrill of the piece and the pleasure of promoting an artist I appreciate, but also I feel as though I instantly gain some new insight, I sell work of my own or meet an incredible, inspiring person. Anyway, I enjoy acquiring works from my local artist friends, as well as works by emerging artists we find in NY or the art fairs. The first pieces we've bought from commercial galleries have been mostly photography and video art. But we currently have our eye on two artists who do both painting and sculpture.

What painting do you have hanging in your living room?

(laugh) For a long time my entire house was my own vanity gallery. I've been slowly replacing my own work with the inspirational works of others. As for our living room, we don't really have much wall space and we move things around... I guess the art to mention is the unchanging one over our bed. One of my dealers (and good friend) acquired a masterfully done triptych by S&P Stanikas, a very talented Lithuanian couple that work collaboratively. One of the three drawings was separated from the other two due to its highly explicit subject matter. Knowing how deeply I would appreciate the drawing, he made me a deal I couldn't refuse saying, "My wife would never let me hang this in our

home". So, it's in our bedroom and I am struck everyday with the incredibly beautiful rendering and treatment of this work on paper. Some may find it pretty provoking, but I don't care, as I'm mostly in awe of the sketched anatomy based on Renaissance drawing principals. It's like standing before a modern Michelangelo - and because I like permeating, confrontational subject matter, the sexual nature of it is just a bonus for me.

Do you believe art should serve a political purpose or remain neutral?

Somewhere I picked up this idea that all *good art* was political... More specifically, that an artist working on a theme such as personal explorations, innovations, social commentary or poeticizing everyday life, etc stems from one's 'personal politics'. In other words, the artist's autonomy coupled with deliberately chosen materials results in works of art, constructions of identity and meaning ... and culture itself. If all that's true, I'm not sure what's *neutral* about it. And if an artist claims to produce a completely neutral work, it can't be promised that a viewer won't bring a political interpretation to the work. Political or neutral, sensationalistic or understated, I like work that evokes a response, challenges and inspires me, is well crafted and stays with me years later.



Albino Peacock mixed media

Explain your process from start to finish with any given work

My process varies from project to project. With my painting, rather than staying consistent and building from successes in my craft, I tend to inject something different each time that keeps me in the struggle but keeps me growing. Like in my last painting, "Hedone," I started with an opaque metallic imprimatura, which showed every imperfection and was really tricky with glazing, or in "Butterfly Kisses" where I decided to work oil over an unsealed clay board, which created way more drag on the brush than I'm used to, but resulted in a really dry, smooth, chalky effect, or "Surrender" where I built up the primer and sanded for a new texture but then was totally unpredictable, using oil paints with nail polish or gluing things onto the surface ... all a gamble.

Recently, I got to the point that I wanted to make things I couldn't do on my own and so I started asking for help. Currently, I'm working on several things, all of which I've never done before. I'm working on a large mixed media collage on paper in my studio and I'm using new materials to build a rock base for one of my large cat sculptures in my garage. But I guess the most different and interesting

process I could share is that for the past two weeks I've been going to my local taxidermist for technical support for a slightly more ambitious sculpture I wanted to build.

I started with a giant African giraffe form and I wanted to convert it into a lofty albino peacock (only the bust, not the tail). The raw form I bought came in two parts and I thought my biggest challenge was to get the trajectory correct for the telescoping pipe built into the interior for stability, which would also allow for an easy 2- part assembly on site and avoid shipping one piece in a huge crate.

Thinking who might have the most experience with this type of form, I called my local taxidermist. The day I showed up to meet the owner, I was dressed up more than usual as I had an important meeting to go to directly after. So I felt very out of place standing nearby attempting to enroll him in supporting my art project, while he barely looked up from the deer he was skinning on his lap. It took me a moment to realize that in my little black ballet slippers, I was standing in a pool of animal blood. I have to say it left an impression but the experience has been much more than I expected from my preconceived ideas of working in a taxidermy shop. Immediately, I was ecstatic with their



“anything can be done” attitude. Weeks later, I continue to appreciate their philosophies, artistry and ingenuity.

After a couple trips to Home Depot, my most anticipated 6 foot long telescoping PVC interior support was completed the first day. Then it was a matter of my getting the proportions of a peacock correct by cutting length off the neck and rebuilding the foam to fill-in for a fluid shape. I repeated this step twice, taking two feet total off the length of the neck, two different occasions. I sealed the entire form with plaster cast and paper mache. By referencing photos of peacocks and the live peacock farm that the owner coincidentally happened to have, I created the detail of the face with epoxy sculpt and painted it with

pearlescent enamels. I had the biggest possible albino elephant glass eyes custom made (due to the round pupil, the same as a bird). I covered the beak in Swarovski crystals, and I carefully placed glass pitcher stir rods into inserted ‘sleeves’ made from drilling into wood dowels glued into the foam head to create the plume. Finally, using an acid-free adhesive and a nail gun to hide the seams, we covered the form with 3 different matching white faux fur pelts to mimic feathers. Oh, one of the days I was inspired and brought along my camera with storyboard sketches. I asked if it would offend them if I documented some of the still-lives and if he would mind snapping some photos of me in their unusual environment. Like all else, he was ‘game’ ...(laugh) no pun intended!

Jon Hul

www.jonhulfineart.com





Born in Pittsburgh, PA, Jon Hul was raised by his parents in both California and Nevada. In 1971, he attended Orr Junior High School (Las Vegas, NV). In 1974, he attended Valley High School (Las Vegas, NV) and studied commercial design, oil painting, watercolor painting, drawing portraits, and making shapes in ceramics. His teachers encouraged him to try different mediums for use on both painting and drawing technique skills and studies. To this day he is still using some of their methods.

Jon Hul does not have a college degree or formal training. After graduating from high school, he studied the artists which inspired him the most. These artists were Salvador Dali, Frank Frazetta, Alberto Vargas, M. C. Escher, and Pablo Picasso. Later on he studied the works of Patrick Nagel, Olivia and Sorayama paying close attention to the way they made use of color, format, style, technique, subject matter, impact, consistency, and so on.

Visit his web site which is continuously updated with new erotic, sexy works in both black & white and color.



Alicia Hoffman

My Father's Skin

Was often burnt,
blistered and cracked
like old veneer, the outer
albumen of egg. I, a short
summer haystack, hungry
for the job of removing it,
iridescent layer by layer,
liking it like sunday pancakes,
the peeling of warm skin off
my daddy's back, though
I would never call it that,
the thin skin of white a place
to finger before nearing the flesh
and the freckles resembled love,
and the one that did not bother
with sun screen, the one who did
not think much of driving
home the exhaustion of heavy
work, the sweat, the slight
tangy scent of the chemical
thinner he used to empty
the near bare barrels with
on the driveway near the back,
streaming the fumes to the ground,
scrubbing at the painted dust,
always agreed to my tiny requests
as tiny flecks of color – white, gray,
canary yellow came to float
like swirling haloed dust
moats around his hands and arms
and sun-burnt skin like wings
before he and I shook them off
again to vanish in the gold clean sun.

Lesson

Never write the word soul because soul is cliché, as much as this dagger of a poem may stab your heart, as much as this life is so much like love it may as well be a bloody rose. Soul is a touchy thing. Not man nor beast, nor something any sane person would shake a stick at. I just took my dog for a walk, my furry, four-legged beast of a dog, a mutt of a dog, really, the pathetic prancing, the pink candy tongue, toenails click-clacking on the sidewalk and the street cement, and this is normal, this walking routine. I say this way and she comes. I say stay and the damn dog stays. Another dog barks and I say no and she must understand something in that monosyllabic no that makes her go no bark. So we walked, and the sun was shining in the blue sky like it hadn't shone in months, and the snow was gone, and the ground was remembering its green, and there was a family, a boy, a girl, playing Frisbee with their father in the park, and this was beautiful, and someone on their porch said how are you liking this spring and I smiled and without thinking said it's about time and then I was standing on the corner of Averill and South in the late afternoon shade of an average March in an average year and I knew the word, its buoyancy and fresh clean float, and they were right, I cannot write this, nothing comes close.

● Alicia Hoffman lives, writes and teaches in Rochester, New York. A graduate of the poetry writing program at the State University of New York at Brockport, her work has been published in *Redactions*, *Red Wheelbarrow*, *elimae*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Umbrella*, *The Centrifugal Eye*, *Oak Bend Review*, *Pirene's Fountain* and elsewhere. She enjoys red wine, urban walks, and sandwiches. She can be reached at <mailto:newyorkcatcher@gmail.com>

Victor Wang

www.victorwang.net



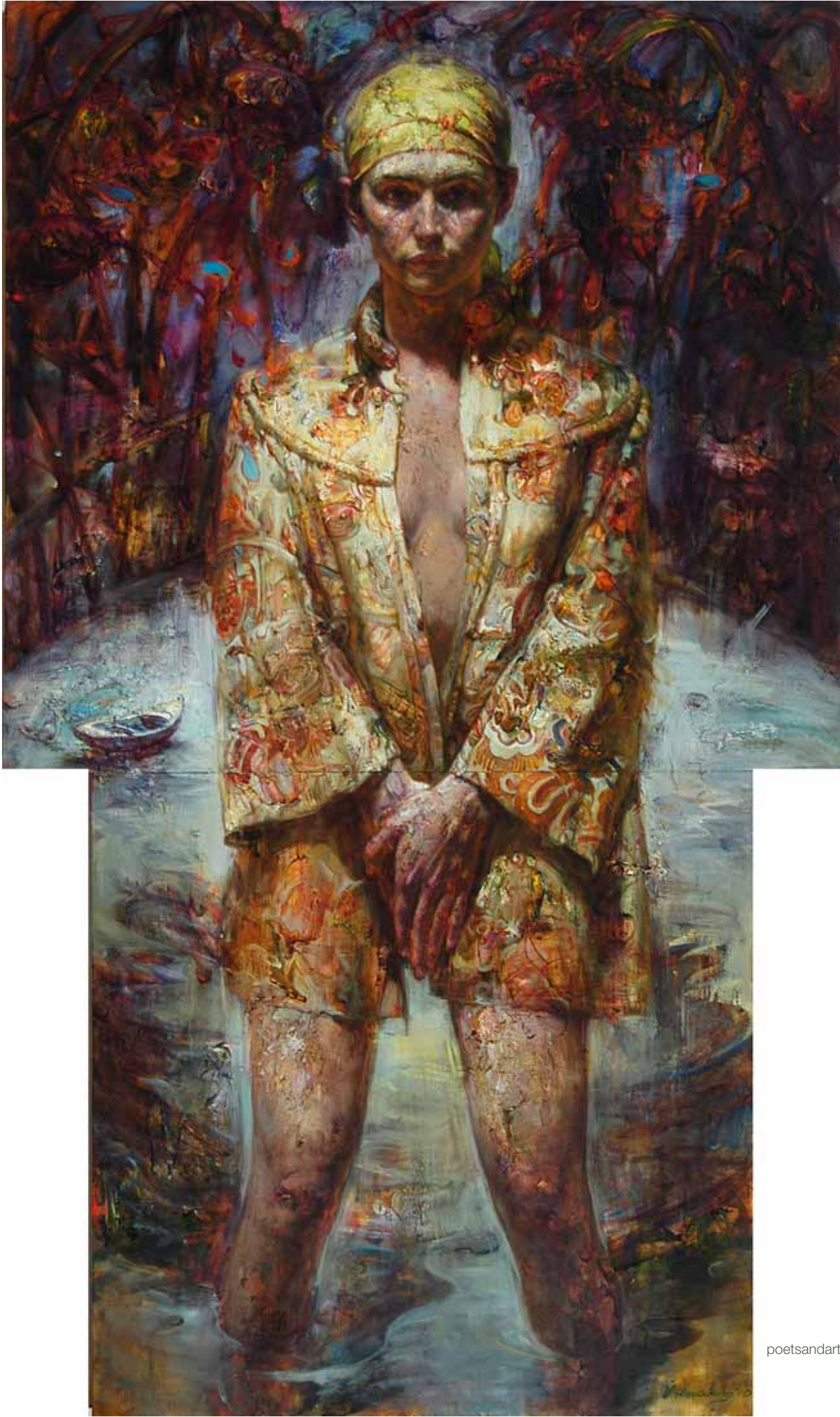
Wang grew up in Northern China and graduated from The Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts, one of three top art institutes in China. After graduation he taught there for four and half years and was sent to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as a visiting scholar. He currently lives in St. Louis, where he teaches painting, drawing and graduate critique classes as a full professor at Fontbonne University. He has exhibited widely across the country and internationally and has won various awards for excellence, including awards for both painting and art teaching.

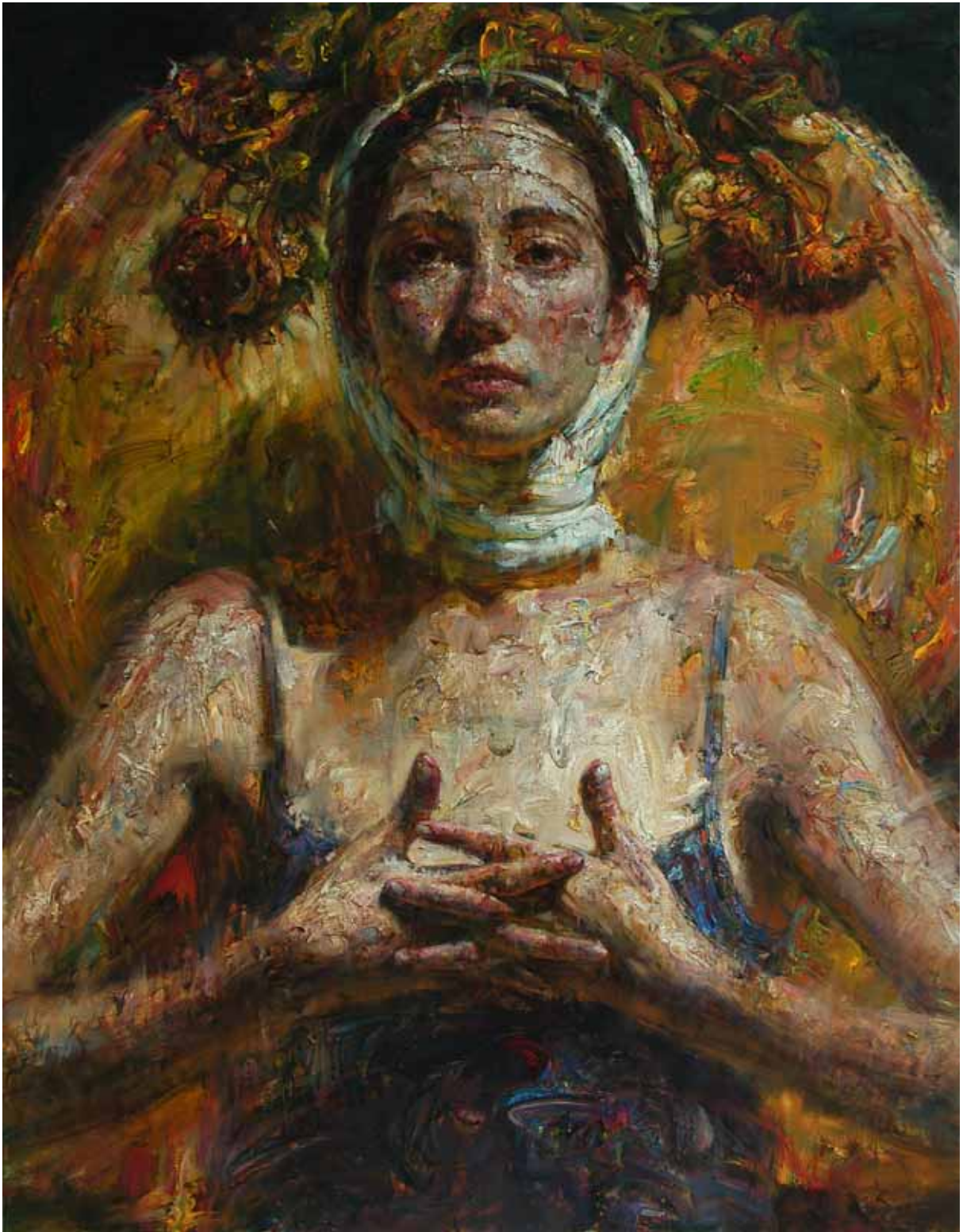
His work has been shown at Arcadia gallery, in New York City; Odon Wagner gallery, in Toronto; the Atrium gallery, in St. Louis, among others.



RIGHT: ***Sleeping Drummer***
oil and collage on canvas
50"x52"

OPPOSITE PAGE:
The Boat
oil and collage on canvas
73.5"x42"





Holding a Moment oil and collage on canvas 63"x48"

“The human figures in my paintings serve as vehicles to convey the human experience, representing the emotional tension and psychological drama of life’s turning points. The blend of luminous color and buttery texture evoke the enigmatic environment where these moments of meditation originate. I have interwoven the sunflower – a prominent symbol throughout my life embodying both sorrow and joy – into my paintings. Incorporating the collaged images from China’s Tang Dynasty simultaneously acts as background and creates the signature of my heritage.”

[Victor Wang](#)



Autumn Harvest oil and collage on canvas 48"x60"

Q&A Victor Wang

Do you have a ritual you follow before each new work is started?

Yes. After pasting the digital images, I then put earthy colors over it before starting to draw the composition.

Detail what is on your palette.

Flake white, cadmium yellow, yellow ochre, burn sienna, burn umber, terre verte, vermilion, alizarin crimson, cerulean blue, and ultramarine blue. Neo-megilp as a painting medium.

What is your pet peeve regarding today's art scene?

Painters who talk about art in a way that is better than making art.

How does your family life come into play with your artistic life?

My family and my own life experiences have projected upon my art a lot.

How has digital accessibility come into play with your work?

I have been using digital image collages in my paintings.

Have you ever edited your work or censored anything for fear of offending someone?

Yes.

Do you believe art should serve a political purpose or remain neutral?

This is an artist's choice. Personally, I choose for my art to remain neutral, for now.

What painting to you have hanging in your living room?

My wife's portrait.

How long does one of your pieces take to finish?

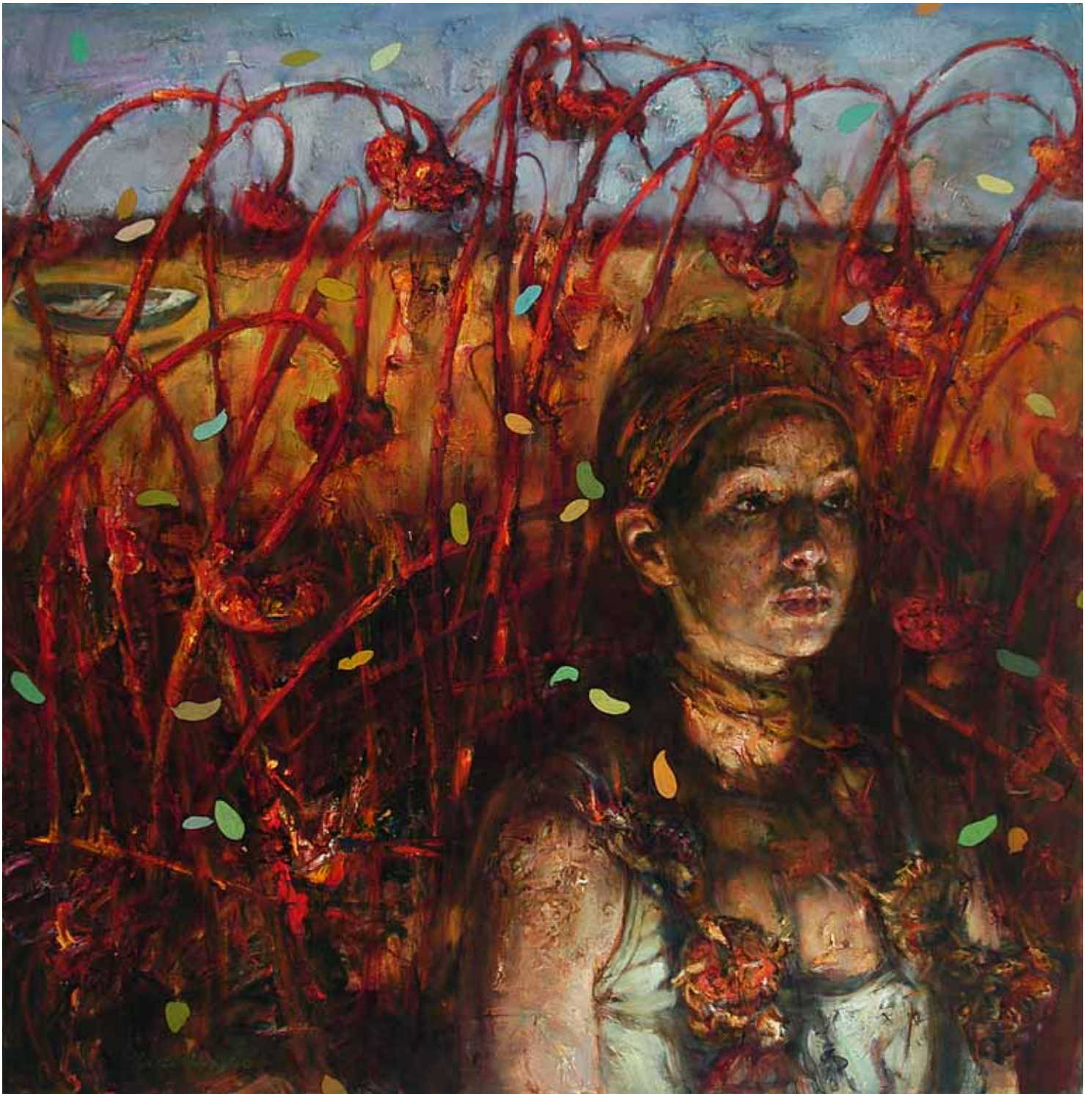
A month for some, but it really depends.



ABOVE: **After Rain**
oil and collage on canvas
55"x78"

RIGHT: **Flowered Turban**
oil and collage on canvas
50"x52"





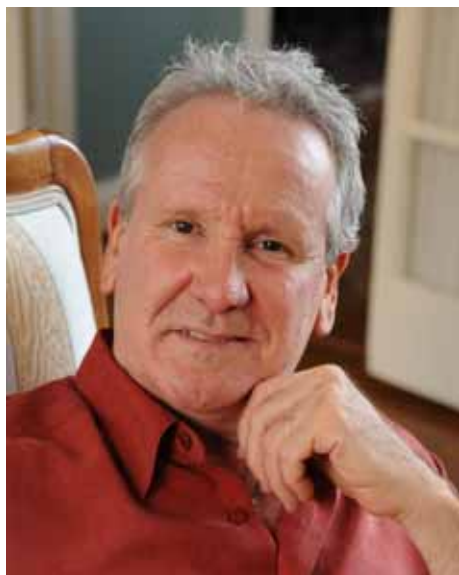
Defoliation oil and collage on canvas 52"x50"

INTROSPECTIVE: *Defoliation*

My initial inspiration of "Defoliation" was based upon the colors of a sunflower field during sunset. The groups of sunflowers were dancing together as if they were flamingoes. But after finishing this painting, I was not satisfied and felt if something were missing for the composition. One morning after the rain, I walked my dog in a parking lot and, suddenly, saw a pattern of leaves on ground and the colors were very vivid because they had been wet by the rain. I immediately received inspiration for knowing how to finish this painting. The pattern of leaves on the surface of the composition made the painting come alive.

Victor Wang

Jorge Alberto



In 2001 Jorge Alberto was awarded a bronze medal for his work at the International Biannual of Contemporary Art from the City of Florence, Italy. 890 artist from 40 countries entered this competition.

Jorge Alberto Gonzalez lives and works in Baltimore, Maryland, and paints under the name of Jorge Alberto. For Jorge Alberto, Baltimore offers an extensive cultural community and is conveniently located near major metropolitan cities, such as Washington DC, Philadelphia, and New York City where he enjoys support from the artistic community. A former resident of Florence Italy, Jorge Alberto returns each year to paint and reflect in this city of creative masters.

Jorge Alberto emigrated from Cuba to the United States with his family in 1965.







Photos of Rita Dove
by Fred Viebahn

Rita Dove

Rita Dove is one of the most beloved poets in American history. If she is a “celebrity,” then the word suddenly means glamour plus more: someone who can make new art in new ways achieve its highest purpose, while holding on to a personality and style. She’s been recognized and honored with America’s top prizes for accomplishments in poetry, prose, drama and music. Rita Dove is Commonwealth Professor of English at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, where she lives with her husband, the German novelist/author/photographer Fred Viebahn. They have one daughter, Aviva, now herself a teacher. Rita and Fred are ballroom dancers! They walk through the world, filling it with flowers. Rita sings, and also writes/composes for musicians. She holds the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry.

GC: Describe what you were wearing on the day of your marriage to Fred Viebahn.

RD: We were married in 1979 by the mayor of Elyria, in a civil ceremony, just family and a few close friends. I sewed my own outfit, a 2-piece salmon satin thing with a wide draped-boat neckline, and a skirt with drawstrings in the side seams, so you could shir the hemline by pulling up the sides– like curtain drapery, but much daintier! But the real challenge was sewing Fred’s wedding suit for the large reception and party we threw a few weeks later –it was lavender brushed corduroy, without wales, just that suede-like finish. Lavender! – with lapels to die for, and a slight bell bottom to the legs. Oh, and a vest, too. It was beautiful, and crazy – I almost went crazy finessing the tailoring. A student of Fred’s (he was teaching at Oberlin College at the time) made each of us flower garlands to wear as crowns. What can I say? It was the seventies.

GC: What did you wear for your inaugural poetry reading at The Library of Congress, as U.S. Poet Laureate in 1993?

RD: It’s odd . . . I can’t remember! I do know what I wore to the official luncheon that day – a pink suit, which stood out among the navy blue and blacks like a rose. Most of my fashion attention was devoted to the after-gig that evening: a White House state dinner in honor of arts and humanities month (October). The poetry reading was held in the Great Hall of the Library of Congress’s Jefferson Building, and afterwards I was whisked up to the Poetry Office with its splendid view of the Capitol, in order to change into a very extravagant formal. It was my first serious black tie event, and it was a mad dash; Fred and I

had about 20 minutes to change, with only a hand mirror between us. Oh, that dress –yards of black skirt, sheer long sleeves, and a bodice marvelously beaded in gold. I wore it to nearly every black tie event for years ...and finally lost it in our house fire in 1998.

GC: How were you notified of the Pulitzer Prize Award for *Thomas and Beulah*?

RD: The announcements are made at Columbia University, at 3pm EST, I believe, and then the journalists scurry about trying to contact the winners. I was living in Tempe, Arizona at the time, so it was just after 12 noon when the news reached the English department at Arizona State University, where I was teaching. My private number was unlisted, so the first person reached by a reporter was my department chair, Nick Salerno. Nick called me at home, since I didn’t have classes that day, which also happened to be my husband’s 40th birthday. All of which goes to explain why I was screening calls and didn’t answer at first, even though I could hear Nick pleading: “Rita, I know you’re there – pick up!” I was standing in the kitchen with a broom in my hands, doing a bit of surreptitious cleaning before my husband got up (we’re both night owls and customarily go to bed no earlier than 4-5 a.m.); I’d planned a surprise birthday party that evening with a few friends. But something in Nick’s voice made me reconsider; I grabbed the phone and asked, “What is it?”, and when Nick said, “You got the Pulitzer!” it didn’t register at all. I had no idea I was even in the running; winning any kind of prize was the furthest thing from my mind. So I blurted out, “No!” and Nick countered with “Yes!”,; we went back and forth for a few more times before I realized that Nick’s voice was several tones higher



than usual, which was when it all finally sunk in. I must have screamed, because Fred came running into the kitchen shouting “What’s wrong?” Nick said he’d organize a press conference for 3 o’clock, and when I wailed, “But I don’t know how to do a press conference!” he replied, “You’ll learn,” and hung up.

GC: As an accomplished musician, you must have started early. When did you begin music lessons? Did you protest/resist practicing?

RD: My fourth grade classmates and I were started on Tonettes; those who expressed further interest were taken to the music room and allowed to choose an instrument. My brother, two grades ahead of me, played the clarinet, so I steered clear of the woodwinds. All the other girls chose flute or violin, so they were out for me, too. I really didn’t know what a cello was, just that it was a string instrument, and that it sounded warm and mysterious. I nearly wept when the music teacher pulled out this monstrous thing, but I was too mortified to change my mind. After I heard the sound close up –and realized that I could physically wrap myself around the music –I was smitten. I started private music lessons when I was ten; every Saturday my other would drive me downtown to the Akron Conservatory of Music and wait out the hour in the lobby. When it came to practicing, I was the original geek. I sawed away

every chance I got; then one day my dad yelled up from the living room, “Hey Rita, that’s the ‘Old Oaken Jug’, isn’t it?” —and I realized that he hadn’t recognized the tune from all the practice sessions before. My poor parents! But there was a reason for my diligence: My maternal grandparents were musicians, my mother and her siblings had been part of a child gospel quartet, my Dad had a great voice and loved to devise new harmonies for the hymns sung in church – in other words, throughout my childhood there was always music and the delight of harmonic invention, and I wanted to bathe in that kind of joy.

GC: From writing the novel *Through the Ivory Gate*, what did you learn about the use of Time in structuring a novel?

RD: When you’re writing a novel, you may move your character(s) along a path in a garden. Everything that belongs to that moment is animated and moves as well– the scent of hyacinths, a gurgling brook, the birds’ twitterings, the distant roar of traffic, the feel of dust and small stones underfoot. When you’re writing a poem, Time swirls around the protagonist, who contemplates her existence at that moment, or contemplates the moment itself, as if from the still eye of the hurricane. A prose writer describes the well and may look into it, but treats it only as a moment, a

pebble thrown into the flow of time; she considers her natural habitat and will reenter the stream – indeed, she’s never left it. A poet looks down the well and feels the garden around her. In poetry, Time is a vertical phenomenon; in prose, it is a horizontal phenomenon.

GC: While taking ballroom dance lessons, what did you learn about yourself that surprised you?

RD: Let me back up for a second and talk about my opera training, which helped prepare me for several revelations I had as a ballroom dancer. I began taking voice lessons when Aviva was 5 years old; I’d always loved to sing, to myself and just around the house, but when I began not being able to hit the high notes of some of my favorite songs, I worried that childbearing had compromised my vocal muscles – that, in short, I was growing old. So I started lessons with an opera singer and discovered that I was a soprano, which terrified me –as a cellist, I was used to doing harmony; being shy, I didn’t want to sing lead. I had no desire to get up on stage and sing before an audience; I was a closet ariaist. Of course, my voice teacher figured out a way to trick me into a few opera scenes, and my experience giving poetry readings helped me to wrestle with my stage fright, so that finally I grew to love the flagrant exhibition that operatic performance is.

Now, let’s fast forward about ten years to ballroom dance, which is even more extroverted than singing. I’d been a majorette in high school, so the prospect of prancing around in a short skirt didn’t daunt me; but to perform choreography in backless, sequined and feathered outfits was another level altogether. So I called upon both my poetry reading and singing experiences to deal with this very physical sense of exposure. The biggest surprise was the frustration I felt having to rely upon my partner to lead me, especially if he forgot the steps or misheard the beat. It seems paradoxical, but I would have rather danced solo than try to control my own shyness while enduring the missteps of a partner who had a flawed musical ear. At the very least, I think I would have felt less nervous if I could have led.

One final revelation: I never expected to fall in love with the smooth dances, waltz and foxtrot in particular. I figured myself for a Latin girl; and though I do love samba, cha cha, and rumba, there’s a magic that obtains only when you move more slowly and fluidly with your partner, and the power of two bodies in sync can generate an energy that feels like you’re floating, soaring – it’s incredible.

GC: If Sophocles had attended your play *The Darker Face of the Earth*, what would he have appreciated?

RD: Once Sophocles had familiarized himself with the

institution of slavery as it functioned in antebellum South Carolina, I think he would have appreciated the concept of fate and the way it is handled in my play. I don’t think he would have been fond of the moral implications surrounding slavery, and in fact I think he would have been disturbed that a –indeed, the entire concept of slavery– is brought to the forefront of the play and used as the vehicle to propel the action, rather than concentrating on the inhabitants of the “big house”. Having said that, he would have applauded, or at least grunted in approval, the way the play brings out Amalia’s – the plantation’s mistress’s – sense of being trapped in that system of fate. I would like to think that he would have appreciated the poetic language of the play, as well as the use of the slaves as a type of chorus.

GC: In your book of poems *Mother Love*, it is said you “recharged” the sonnet form. What do you think that means?

RD: A sonnet is a love poem, not an artifact – a moment of reflection on the human dilemma declaring affection. It is not something to be studied, revered, dissected, or parsed, yet that is what most of us think of when confronted with the term. Shakespeare’s sonnets are gorgeous, but they were never meant to be off-putting to their perceived recipients otherwise, how could he have expected to get any action? In order to bring the sonnet into the twentieth century, I believe this comfort zone has to be redrawn, both sociologically and linguistically. The quality of spoken diction has changed dramatically since Shakespeare’s time – contractions have quickened the delivery and made the base rhythms choppy, American pronunciation is more nasal and jazzy than British as well. Add to the mix the fact that the Bard could be deliciously bawdy, hip and irreverent, and what it means is that an audience listening to Shakespearean verse would have felt considerably less estrangement than an audience today might. When I began writing the poems in *Mother Love*, I never thought to myself: I am writing a sonnet. I wrote first, then found the rhymes in the text. After time, I knew without counting when I had 14 lines, even if the lines weren’t yet determined. I breathed rhymes, I felt the poem’s length in the same way that a musician embodies the time and key signatures, even if occasionally she might have to tap out a tricky measure or note the emphatic suspense of an accidental sharp or flat.

GC: If you will permit me to say so – you have distinguished yourself as a writer, singer, dancer, stage performer, musician, linguist, classicist, wife, and mother – but, can you cook?

RD: You make it sound like I actually know my way around all those activities! Seriously, I feel like a constant student, an eternal apprentice, in everything I do, even writing – well, especially writing. Being an apprentice is a blessed state for me; I am always

trying to question myself, to stretch the boundaries of my comfort zone.

Back to the question: yes, I can cook, but I'm no gourmet chef; that's the provenance of my daughter. I'm an old school make-do-with-what's-in-the-freezer kind of cook; I've never been comfortable with picking out dew-fresh produce from the farmers' market or pounding out my own pesto. I used to love trying out new complicated recipes that required intricate kitchen implements, and I have an intuitionist's gift when it comes to baking – I can improvise a cookie dough or cake batter without a recipe, because I understand how pastry thinks. In recent years, though, I've cooked less and less, because there simply isn't enough time. I'm either on the road or playing catch-up whenever I'm home; plus, there's teaching as well as fielding a relentless stream of requests. I miss that time in the kitchen, just as I miss sewing.

GC: What is your daughter Aviva's profession?

RD: She earned an MA in art history and a PhD in visual and cultural studies and currently teaches at the University of Northern Colorado; she's also a freelance writer for Ms. Magazine.

GC: Describe yourself as an eight-year-old child in Akron Ohio. How does your present life match the eight-year-old's imagination?

RD: I was terrifically shy. I thought I was homely. I'd overheard the grownups remarking on my wide-set eyes as if they were very odd, that one could fit a third eye between them, so naturally I thought I was a freak. I remember looking down at the ground a lot; the neighborhood streets were bricked, and I used to study them, noting the serial numbers and the way they glistened after rain. Despite these bouts of self-

consciousness, though, I was essentially a happy child, though, especially when playing with my older brother, who was (and still is) sweetly protective. I loved school and was greedy for knowledge – then as now, I became a bold personality when living between the pages of a book. If that eight-year old had been given a glimpse of my life now, I don't think she would have been surprised about the writing part – pleased and amazed that she would have been allowed to pursue such a path, perhaps, since every self-respecting black child who did well in school was expected to become a doctor, dentist, lawyer, or

teacher, but not stunned that her adult self would have relished a life in literature. I am still very shy, even though no one believes me. What I've learned over the years is to separate my personal self from the public projection of that self.

GC: At the present, are you working on poetry, prose, drama, or criticism?

RD: The moment finds me in the final throes of editing *The Penguin Anthology of Twentieth Century*

American Poetry. I'm in the permissions fees negotiations phase, which is the only unpleasant part of what has otherwise been a nurturing, soul-enriching enterprise. Imagine having the opportunity—indeed the mission—to read poems written in America from the beginning of the last century to the millennium! It was like being asked to dawdle in the library all day, every day, as one's job. Right now, though, I'm crunching numbers and calculating metaphors against a hard line budget, deleting poems and even removing poets I'd initially chosen to include, and I find this chore exceedingly depressing and draining. So there's not much writing going on at the moment, just jottings in my notebook. But I've got a sabbatical this year, so my thoughts are already yearning toward new poems; I feel the next eruption will be lyric poems, with perhaps a play or a set of one-acts in the mix.



Bridget Lutherborrow

Bridget Lutherborrow is a writer of poetry and prose currently living in Sydney, Australia. She likes to drink coffee with milk or gin with lime, depending on the time. She has two degrees from the University of Wollongong (in communications and creative writing) and a bunch of publications under her hat. It's a nice hat.

Finishing

I come home
to a pile of sand
on the street outside
my door - grey,
bathed in lamplight
not enough to soothe
the cramp of concrete
on concrete or mend
this fresh welt of sky
just enough to beach
myself a moment
as another midnight taxi
pulls away. A crunch
underfoot, the smell
of kelp - each street
an empty shoreline,
quiet things - a skip bin
a fingernail of moon
a toppled bottle of balloon
gas, sprawled in rain
like it abandoned reason

Fernando Rosas

www.fernandorosasartes.blogspot.com



Fernando Rosas was born in Mendoza, Argentina, the 23rd of April of 1976. He completed his studies at the Provincial School of Fine Arts, graduating in 1995 as a Fine Arts Teacher. Since 1992, he has individually and regularly shown his creations in Mendoza, Buenos Aires, Rosario, Venado Tuerto (Santa Fe) y Santiago de Chile. He takes part in both collective and individual exhibitions.

His work comprises mainly painting, but drawing and sculpture are not beyond the grasp of his interests.

Some of his works are already part of private collections in the USA, Mexico, Thailand, Ireland, Holland, and Argentina.



The Author oil on M.D.F. 91x63cm



“I think of painting as my best way to create an image that could not otherwise be seen without my intervention. A space where shapes are ruled by unknown laws. Bodies that are anatomically redefined, which find in such strange setting their natural environment, and are capable of loving or feeling naturally. That is when I feel that I have created something...”

Fernando Rosas



Threat
oil on M.D.F.
106x65cm



Domestic Archery oil on M.D.F. 91x130cm

Q&A Fernando Rosas

Do you have a ritual you follow before each new work is started?

No I don't, the only way in which I can give birth to a painting is being at my workshop, influenced by previous works and by its atmosphere, its smells, the reverberations of light, and so forth. I always listen to music when I work, and this sets a more fitting work environment. When painting, the only essential thing to have at your disposal is time.

What is your pet peeve regarding today's art scene?

Regarding arts, almost nothing annoys me. I believe multiplicity gives us the chance to contemplate a wide scope of approaches, and with time the shallow or untruthful ones are left behind. This does not mean that I do not prefer one type of art over others. I am interested in the knowledge of my craft, although a moving or stirring image is not construed on this alone; yet, the practice of art

leads to thousands of paths that, if not walked, are lost forever and the potential for improvement is so diminished.

I do not think the art scene should be depicted as a competition for space, publicity or market. I believe all forms of expression can coexist in harmony.

How has digital accessibility come into play with your work?

It multiplies by hundreds the number of images and pieces of information that are meaningful to my perception of the world. However, against a blank canvas, I am a naked man facing emptiness. The almost one thing important to me at that point is the challenge I am about to solve with my hands. Everything else fades away.

Have you ever edited your work or censored anything for fear of offending someone?

No, I never censor my work; though I do not have any



Bad Arguments oil on M.D.F. 114x126cm

interest in creating conflict or controversy. What I try to do is to exhibit my work in places where it will not be offensive to anyone, or where it will be offensive to the least number of people. In fact, I never heard of anyone who had felt offended by my paintings. My work is not submitted to prior censorship.

Why are you a painter?

I am not sure. My father is a sculptor, but for a long time I studied for a technical degree. Once, while I was copying a painting with watercolors as a game, I felt for the first time the wonder of crowding the emptiness. Since then I have been unable to stop; it turned to be my essence. Painting is the means of expression that I prefer over drawing and sculpture -art forms that I have also approached-, oil painting in particular, as it allows me to constantly alter the

limits of shapes, to founder them and take them off their support to my liking, to modify their lights and contrasts, and to model with colors capricious forms, placing them in different settings and contexts, adding temperatures and environments.

Why painting and not sculpture like my father? Perhaps to build my own self free from the temptation of replication or influence. I do not know, the origin of this vocation is blurry.

How long does one of your pieces take to finish?

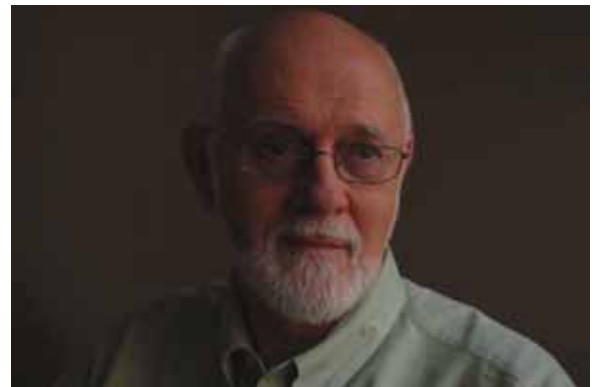
That depends on the clarity of the idea and the assertiveness of my attempts. I have finished paintings in four hours and others have demanded weeks of struggle. There is no set time for their completion; they are the ones who tell me when they're finished.



Jesus and Mary, the Moment After 72"x144"

Trevor Southey

*A Romantic,
Stubborn Idealist*



**“I am the
poet of the
Body and I
am the poet
of the Soul.”**

Walt Whitman

TO FULLY understand the enigmatic Trevor Southey is to allow his paintings, drawings, prints and sculptures to speak about him. Isolating the events of his life which have influenced the mature work that now enjoys museum exposure tells us of the fascinating journey of a man seemingly out of sync with his time, but joining these steps as a thread is to appreciate the way in which Southey has reached the plateau he now savors: ‘I am a Romantic, searching for sensuality, and it gives me an almost Godly power to create a presence on canvas.’ Response to genocide, holocaust, inhuman behavior chokes him and he goes to the canvas or clay where he is at peace making art, in charge of it, keeping out the demons of cruelty and the result he hopes will challenge the viewer, alter their responses, and grow to appreciate the poetic content of his work.

Trevor Southey was born in 1940 in Rhodesia, Africa (now



Nativity 48"x48"

Zimbabwe), the descendent of European colonists who settled in Cape Town, South Africa in the 17th century. These British and African origins followed him as he immigrated to the United States in 1965, having studied art in Durban, South Africa, Sussex, England and the Brigham Young University in Utah. He converted to the Mormon Church, married and sired four children, searching for that utopian life centered on family/farming/art, developed an artists' commune in Alpine, Utah (founding the Mormon Art Movement), divorced, was excommunicated from the Mormon Church and moved to San Francisco having come out as a homosexual man in 1982 while the world was shaken with the specter of AIDS. 'Being gay in that culture is beyond hell... I wanted to be cured so badly. The family is the center of Mormonism —it is the sacred, potent unit.' But Southey did weather these transitions and turned to his art as a means of making sense of the

Eden Farm 48"x72"

world and where it had brought him. He remains devoted to his children and close to his former wife. He finds his spiritual connection to life in the paintings he creates, as in **Nativity**, that may suggest religious history while mirroring his concept of the potent family unit, and while his greatest works are those that deal with the nude or near nude male, he continues to explore the Eternal Feminine so present in his works that reference religious themes.

The Romanticist in Southey is most clearly observed in his large scaled paintings that deal with Biblical references. **Eden Farm** combines many of the elements that recur in most all of Southey's compositions: the nude figures create the narrative while symbols such as the single white iris suggests the purity of the piece, while the milk, the bread, the egg, and the suspended vegetables each appear part of a geometric line of creation, of perfection that Southey derives from his pastoral scene. The true Eden Farm was Southey's home in Utah, but here it is transformed into universal truths about beginnings, family, and sustenance. In **Samaritan** he once again references a Biblical story but brings into play his own conflicts but with the same elements of drawn suggestion he places in all his works: the gift offered to the fallen man is the comfort and the succour of a dove of peace.

In Southey's more directly literal paintings from his series of Biblical works, such as **Jesus and Mary, the Moment After**, the power of his



figurative painting is heightened by the shadowy addition of the shroud-like cloth and his continued symbols of life beyond, such as the presence of symbolic flowers floating in the atmosphere.

Southey's recent works reflect his comfort zone of his present life. In his words 'I freely acknowledge that my particular art does not easily have a place in the current art world. It is certainly not cutting edge as defined by the establishment but nor is it always accessible to the novice. A curator once said to me that I appear to have missed the 20th century. That is not true because I love much of the art of this period and indeed my work does carry some of the language and is somewhat liberated by it, not wedded to any period but tending to visit many. But my work really evolved rather blithely; free of much influence because I lived in what was truly a backwater. Added to that was my somewhat isolated childhood (ill health) that elaborated an already retiring and romantic nature. So I came to this time and place honestly and with enthusiasm... I express myself as I do because that is who I am as a poetically inclined individual. Allowing my natural subconscious free rein and trying to hold back intellectual interference to a large extent is the way that I work.' Southey has



BELOW: *The Meeting* 72"x120" RIGHT: *Vyacheslav* 84"x60"



become more concerned with the complexities of life as we are living it. After visiting Russia he created a series of paintings he collectively calls Warriors – portraits of young Russian soldiers, nude, with the suggestions of their uniforms added to the periphery of the canvases: Southey is suggesting to us that wars and the futility of battle are only the cloaks civilization places on the universal representations of youths from all cultures. These Warriors, like *Vyacheslav* as an example – ‘subtly, almost ironically exposes the reality of conflict, war, and death through the eyes of the most vulnerable and directly affected’.

Now, unafraid to confront the world with his true being, Trevor Southey is painting and sculpting more boldly, as in *The Meeting* where his gift for molding the human figure is enhanced by a more passionate palette and with the addition of whispered sgraffito, adding his words where once only symbols created suggestions of his commitment to his art and to his vision of life he now fully embraces.

Samaritan 48"x60"

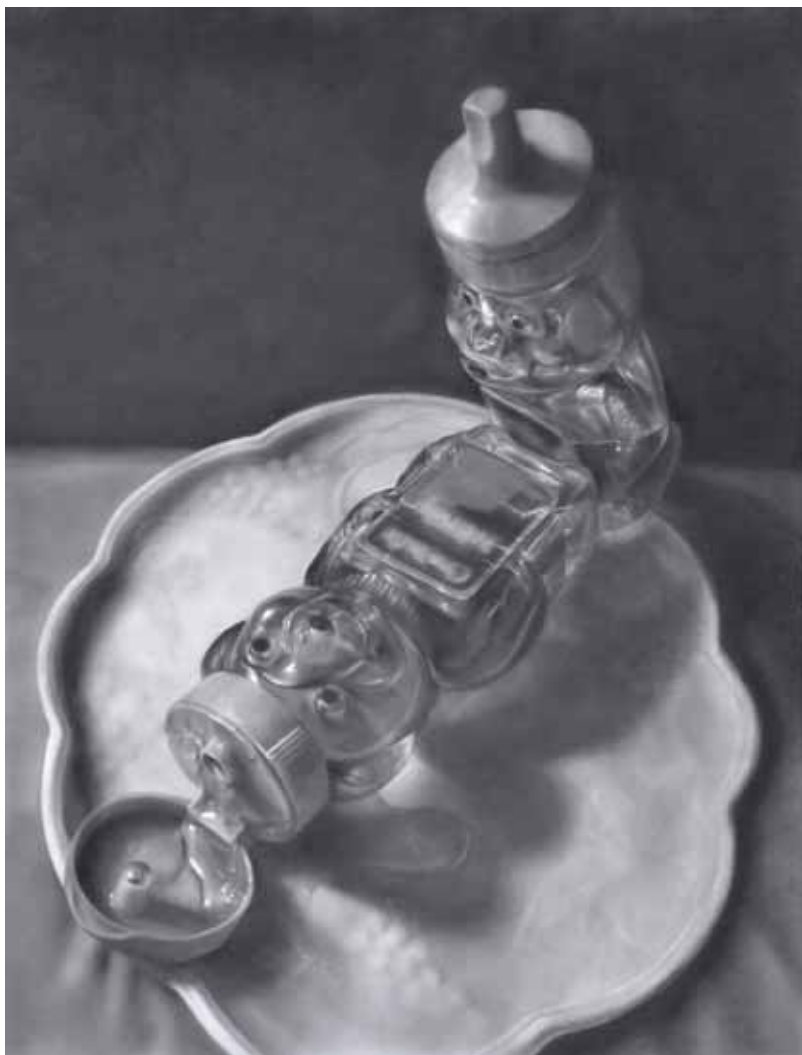


“We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.”

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Melissa Cooke

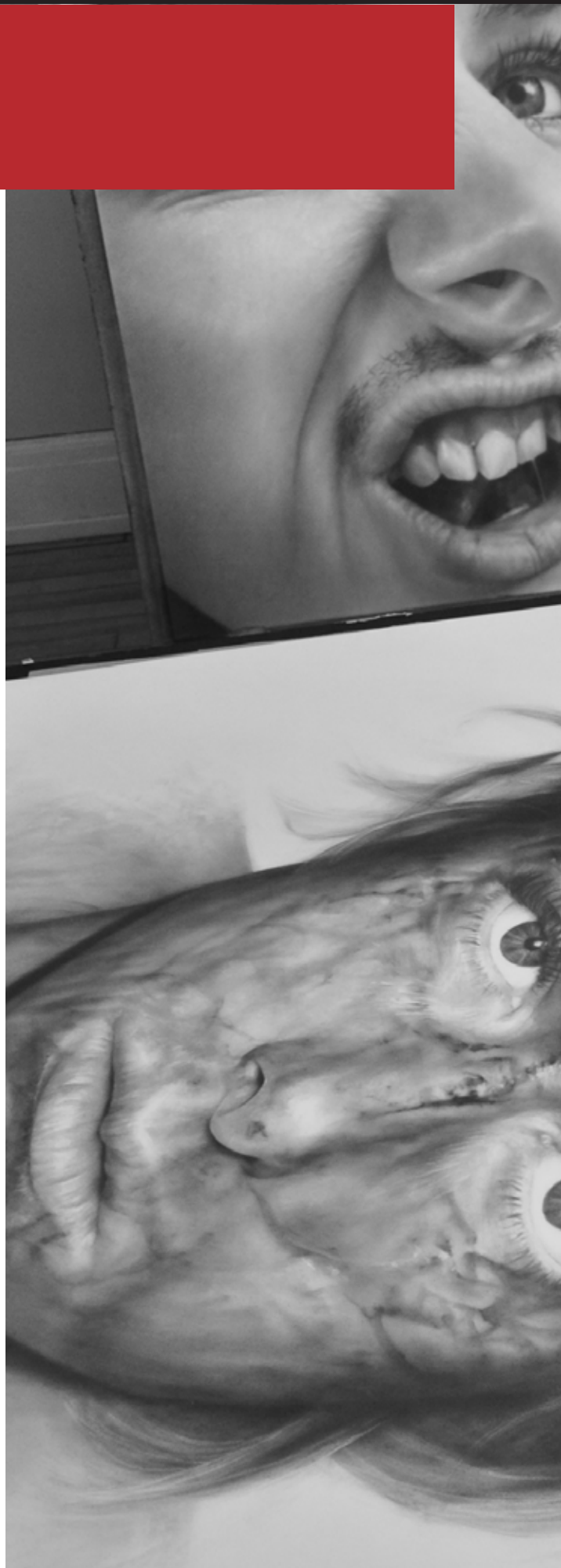
<http://melissacookeart.com/>



The Honeybears graphite on paper 50"x38"

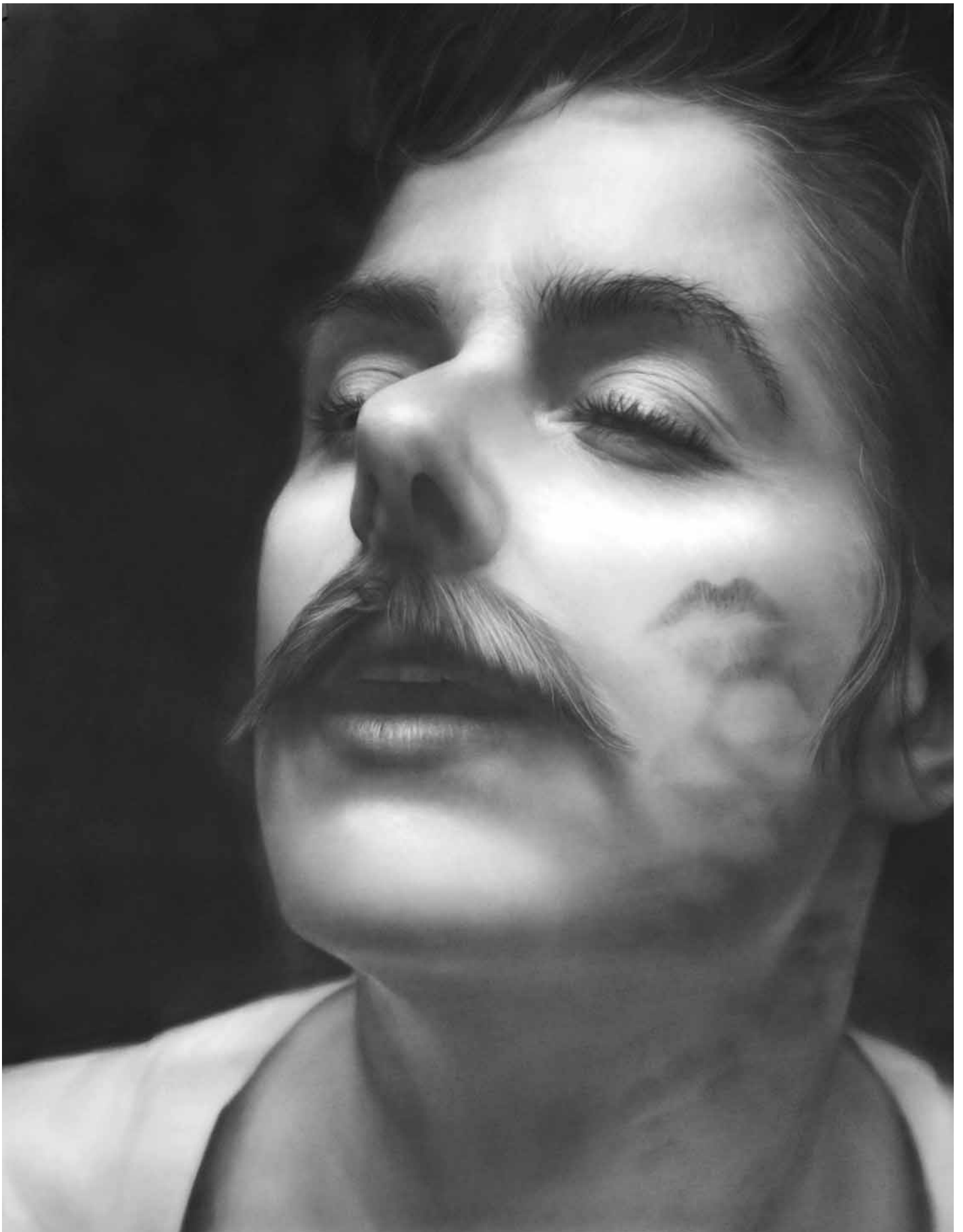
Melissa Cooke was born in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin in 1982. She received her Master's of Art in 2008 from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Melissa is represented by Koplín Del Río in Los Angeles, CA and Jenkins Johnson Gallery in New York, NY. Cooke will be a 2011-2012 Artist-In-Residence at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, Nebraska.

Her work has been exhibited in "The Wisconsin Triennial" at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, "To See Ourselves As Others See Us" at the Museum of Wisconsin Art, "On Paper" at the Jenkins Johnson Gallery in New York, and "West Coast Drawings VIII" at the Davidson Galleries in Seattle, Washington, The Miami Art Fair, The LA Art Show and PULSE Contemporary Art Fair in New York. Cooke's first major solo show "You Know Me Better Than I Know Myself" was exhibited at Koplín Del Río in March-April 2010. Cooke's drawings are in collections such as the Arkansas Art Center, the Howard Tullman Collection, the Wisconsin Union Permanent Art Collection, the Boston Public Library Print Collection, and the Southern Graphics Council Print Collection. Her work was also featured as an Editor's Selection in the latest edition of *New American Painting*, #89.











Too Easily Compromised graphite on paper 50"x38"

Q&A Melissa Cooke

Explain your process.

My drawings are made by dusting thin layers of graphite onto paper with a dry brush. The softness of the graphite provides a smooth surface that can be augmented with details and textures created by erasing. No pencils are used in the work, allowing the surface to glow without the shine of heavy pencil marks. Illusion dissolves into brushwork and the honesty of the material.

Do you have a ritual you follow before each new work is started?

Each piece starts with an inspiration, usually a reoccurring

thought or memory. The titles are either mantras or quotes taken from personal conversations. I then photograph myself as I reenact that scenario and conjure feelings surrounding the situation. Those photos are used as source imagery for the drawings. Through the drawing process, I am continually forced to confront the issue that inspired the piece. The meditative nature of drawing lends to contemplation and an eventual acceptance of the feelings associated with the image. Also, the scale of the drawings demands a physical connection with the work. As I draw, I traverse a path, back and forth, in order to work intimately with the surface and then see the piece from a distance. This dance with my drawing has become a ritual, and ultimately, a release.



Keep It Together graphite on paper 50"x38"



The Fall of Summer graphite on paper 50"x38"

Detail what is on your palette.

A pile of powdered graphite, a brush, and an eraser.

How have social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and others come into play with your art?

I enjoy the interaction that social networks provide. Posts often become a dialog, which frequently fuel my fire. I recently joined Tumblr, which has proven to be a great forum to share insight into my practice. I post photos of works in progress, which motivates me to be more productive and work on a regular schedule.

How has digital accessibility come into play with your work?

I recently read that Gerhard Richter restricted the

reproduction of his work because he felt his paintings should be experienced. I can understand his argument; the aura of the paper's surface is nearly impossible to capture in a digital image. Since it is necessary to have a web presence in today's e-world, I post images of my work, hoping that viewers will be moved to see and experience the drawings in person.

Have you ever edited your work or censored anything for fear of offending someone?

There were points when I was afraid of indulging in certain topics due to fear, but my timidness is fading.

How long does one of your pieces take to finish?

Each piece takes between 30-40 hours to draw.



Too Much, But Never Enough graphite on paper 50"x38"

"My work investigates the latent darkness and sexuality inside all of us. I cast myself as the subject in a myriad of thematic scenarios and employ props, costumes and theatrics to provoke dormant aspects of my identity. My most recent series, "Lost Inside You", portrays situations where inhibitions have been let go, enabling exploration of gender, relationships, and events."

Melissa Cooke

Tory Adkisson

AtlasMoth

Shrugging under the weight
of more than one world,

he knows one wing's enough
to cover the moon

& the other,
a Junk sail, will propel him
from place to place.

He knows he could hide the heartbeat
between his wings long enough
to whisper *finis vitae sed non amoris*.

He knows he could flutter back
where love first descended
from a dark-leaf socket, its chelicerae
outstretched like a friar's
beckoning hands.

He knows he could fold
the earth under the heavy plume

of his shadow, knows nothing
depends on his presence

like aster & water, knows
the shape of his body
whittles away as the day breaks

across the horizon like yolk
bursting in a skillet, knows

in the end he doesn't know
anything.

Tory Adkisson was born in West Covina, California, a suburb of Los Angeles, and currently resides in Columbus, Ohio, where he attends the MFA program at The Ohio State University. His poems have appeared most recently in *The Potomac Review*, *The Los Angeles Review* and *elimae*.

Amy Lind

www.amylind.com



Amy Lind (b. October 6, 1983) began her training in Illustration and Drawing at the Savannah College of Art and Design where she graduated Summa Cum Laude and received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Upon realizing her love for figurative oil painting, Lind sought out brief but very influential opportunities to study portrait painting under both “living master” Maureen Hyde at the Florence Academy of Art and renowned painter Michael Grimaldi at the Bay Area Classical Artist Atelier. Primarily a self-taught painter, Lind has honed her craft over the last four years while working full time as a fine artist. Her eclectic training has provided her with a unique approach and insight to realism and naturalistic painting, which is visible in both the traditional and contemporary qualities that her paintings possess.

In addition to being featured in multiple issues of American Art Collector magazine, Lind was the cover artist for their December 2010 issue. In May 2010, her painting graced the cover of Art Calendar magazine, and her work has appeared in other national publications, including The Art of the Portrait: Journal of the Portrait Society of America. As a recent member of the Oil Painters of America, Lind was honored to have her paintings chosen to hang in both the Oil Painters of America 19th Annual National Juried Exhibition of Traditional Oils and the Oil Painters of America 2010 Western Regional Show. She is currently exhibiting work in group shows around the country, including the Waterhouse Gallery’s “Great American Figurative Show” in Santa Barbara alongside such masters as Richard Schmid, Jeremy Lipking, and Scott Burdick.

Lind’s paintings hang in both public and private collections around the world. On top of gallery work, she is sought out by many for her uncanny ability to capture the likeness and essence of those she paints. Compelled by the strikingly simple, yet infinitely complex qualities of the people that surround her, Lind attempts to convey a sense of life, beauty and truth through her figurative paintings. Her work is recognized for its captivating quality of light and sophisticated use of expressive color.

Hailing from the Chicagoland area, Lind now resides with her husband, a commercial producer, in Los Angeles, California where she has been juried into the prestigious California Art Club’s Mentor Membership program. She is currently represented by Robert Lange Studios in Charleston, South Carolina. In December 2010, Lind held her fifth solo exhibition there titled “Circus of Wonders.”



Star oil on belgian linen 64" x 42"

Adrian Torres

<http://www.facebook.com/ADRIANTORRESART>
<http://adriantorresledesma.blogspot.com/>



Adrian Torres Ledesma was born in Cadiz in 1982. From an early age he began to draw. He studied fine arts at the universities of Sevilla and Barcelona. After finishing his studies he moved to Fort Worth, Texas for three years. While in Texas he painted in the studio of Ron Tomlinson where he realized his first commissions and shows. He later returned to Spain and established his studio in Conil de la Frontera (Cadiz). Since then he has had several expositions in Spain (such as Mallorca and Valencia) and abroad (Miami, Germany, France).



Ain't No Sunshine When She's Gone mixed media on canvas 146x114cm





Theresa mixed media on canvas 135x97cm



Tamara mixed media on canvas 135x97cm

Q&A **Adrian Torres**

Explain your process.

My creative process is always in contrast, strokes and lines, reason and passion... There is always moments in the process where I try to be less conscience and free, and then there are the moments where I constrain and form the shapes. For me it is about getting to the structure and once I arrive at that point, interpret it and give in to my expressive desire.

Color is very important to me and leads me to paint, first thinking of tones and contrasts before form and object.

Do you have a ritual you follow before each new work is started?

Music is a must. I always have music playing while I paint. I also have to be in the right mood because if I find myself sad, I find the results are not satisfactory. I hope my paintings make people happy but first I have to be happy. So I don't paint if I am depressed or sad.

What will be your signature painting?

It is yet to be painted...

Finish this sentence: In an ideal situation I would be in the same publication as...

Gianni Versace, Alexander McQueen, Steven Meisel, Schieler, Matisse, De Kooning, Barry White.

“ If you arrive at the structure of things, you can interpret and utilize that knowledge your way, always with a vision to offer.”

Adrian Torres



You Rock My World mixed media on canvas 195x116cm



INTROSPECTIVE: *I'll Do For You...*

This is my favorite painting of all the paintings I've done. It is the largest I've finished to date (195x195 cm) and also the one that has taken me the longest to complete... almost a year.

My initial idea was to create a painting based on a wood relief from the Renaissance, from there the process evolved and I produced several paintings on the same canvas (something I do often, repaint, I have paintings that have 5 or 6 layers of paintings below). I kept changing the idea, the colors, the composition... twice I decided it was finished (or so I thought). Finally, I covered the whole canvas once again with paint, splashes, drippings and water... as usual the drawing helped me focus and with a new idea (more in sync with the work and in the style that I was creating at that moment) I finished in a short time. For me it was the most complicated composition that I have made to date and the one whose color I prefer. For now I do not plan to change it.

Adrián Torres





David Hargreaves

A Piece of Advice

A loaf of wild chimpanzees
plays fifty-two pickup
with a deck of DNA.
School of thought.
In the wink of a scythe
wheat falls into bushels
of measles and the stroke
of a stick
letters pancakes of clay.
Scrolls of old shamans
keep soaping the cusps
of virgins, dismaying the pestle
of men. And when liters
of engineering flood
the garden, troughs
of numbers recurse
themselves into a box of rain.
And thus the gall of death
will climb the stairs
to down your fifth of Nataraj,
tear your bag of abstractions
asunder
and let a whole host of you
tumble out.

My Name

I mistook your thyroid eyes
for love, Belladonna
and so distrusting
all sense,
common or sixth,
I withdrew
mute
lost
could only pantomime
artless gruels
of glottals, crass
blasphemous
unmanned
stumped, I stumbled
on peg-leg
passions
down hobble-stone streets
seeking heat—
and a few rumbas—
and the pursing of lips
encircling
devotion
to the sacred syllable
Om in the glow
of naked flames
while tongues
aspiring
to firelight
licked my name.

- David Hargreaves lives in Corvallis, Oregon, and teaches at Western Oregon University. A
- linguist and poet, he is currently working on translating poems from the Newar language of
- Kathmandu, Nepal. His own poems have appeared, or will be appearing, in *The Black Boot*,
- *Windfall*, *Tiger's Eye*, *Avocet*, and *Passages North*.

Michael-Earle Carlton

Michael-Earle Carlton was born in France and brought to the U.S. as an infant. She has taught numerous poetry classes, and over the years, she has conducted workshops. In addition, Michael-Earle has been a host on public television in Miami, interviewing many talented poets, who were featured on her show. Presently, she conducts open monthly poetry readings in her Pompano Beach, Florida home. Numerous poetry and prose oeuvre of hers have won many awards, in addition to her being published in various anthologies and magazines. Over the years, she was requested to read her poetry in Merida and Guatemala, Mexico, in addition to being a guest poet at local events. Supporting young writers has been an enjoyable factor in her life, and one she hopes to continue for many years to come.

Alan's Last Gift

Alan was a generous man, showing friendship in numerous ways. His last gift to me was special, in form of a black wool shawl, thread with gold silk. Alan was a sometimes sullen Irishman, who emptied bar glasses faster than they were filled. He went through women as rapidly. He knew how to laugh, until tears rolled down his ruddy cheeks. Holiday season, for many years, he threw a hege celebrating party for friends. Together, he and I shared twenty. Now, long after his demise, that gifted shawl of his remains, having never been worn. Alan now reposes beneath the earth, missed by me, and many others, with only fading gold threads of tarnished silk to keep his memory alive for me.

Tracy Stuckey

www.tracystuckey.com



Tracy Stuckey received his BFA in painting from Florida State University and his MFA from the University of New Mexico. He has exhibited his work extensively throughout the United States, with numerous solo and group exhibitions, including shows curated by Santa Fe gallery owner, Linda Durham, and artist Joel Peter Witkin. He has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards. In 2009 he was a participant at the Center for Land Use Interpretation's Artist in Residence program in Wendover, Utah. He now lives with his wife and fellow artist, Erika Osborne, in Morgantown, West Virginia. As well as being a practicing artist, Tracy is currently a part-time professor at West Virginia University, where he teaches painting and drawing. His work can be seen at the Schmidt Dean Gallery in Philadelphia, PA.

Since 2007, Tracy's paintings have reflected his time living in New Mexico. Growing up in Florida, Tracy was a victim of the over-romanticized American "Wild" West and its inhabitants. He grew up watching Western films and idolizing their characters and longing for the wild open spaces in which they roamed. Only after living in the west and immersing himself in the region and its culture did he grasp some of its complex reality. The narratives in his paintings are sometimes derived from country and western songs while others are based on actual events. The characters and places in his paintings while wearing a cultural costume, attempt to expose a bit of the reality of the modern Western frontier.



TOP: **Target** oil on canvas 40"x60"

ABOVE: **Red Rocket Rider** oil on canvas 45"x66"



Walking Truffles and Soufflé oil on canvas 60"x72"

“My paintings operate in a fictitious world that utilizes the mythologies and realities of the modern American West. I use the cowboy and cowgirl and other stereotypical Western themes coupled with pop cultural depictions to reflect my own interpretations of the region. I am interested in the “Ralphlaurenization” of the iconic West and its characters.” Tracy Stuckey



Bonneville I (Umbrellas) oil on canvas 57"x45"



Red, White and Blue El Camino oil on canvas 60"x54"

Q&A Tracy Stuckey

Do you have a ritual you follow before each new work is started?

I really enjoy building and preparing a new stretcher frame and a canvas. There is something very calming about it. In the end, it is exciting to see a big white blank canvas staring back at me.

How has digital accessibility come into play with your work?

I spend a lot of time creating the layout on my computer before I ever get started painting or building a canvas. I use a lot of found imagery in my work – whether it is animals or landscapes or architecture. I also utilize found images of people. I keep an ongoing file of on my computer that I think I

may be able to use.

Have you ever edited your work or censored anything for fear of offending someone?

I have never worried too much about what people think of my work. I did do a show where the curator, who was a good friend, asked me to do some paintings that were a slight departure from what I had been doing. It was a great challenge and the rest of my work benefited from the show, but I wouldn't consider it censorship.

Do you believe art should serve a political purpose or remain neutral?

Art can do either, but I don't think it can be mindless. It is



Bonneville BBQ oil on canvas 45"x60"

hard for any artist not to let their emotions or surroundings affect their work. I think every artist's personal background and cultural environment shows through in his or her work, whether it is conscious or not. Art certainly has the power to be very political.

What painting do you have hanging in your living room?

One of the best things about being an artist is that you usually surround yourself with other artist's work, over the years my wife and I have collected the work of many of our friends. Because we have so many other pieces of art, we try not to hang anything of our own in the house. In our living room right now we have a few pieces of art hanging. All of the pieces are from artists that we knew in New

Mexico. One of my favorites is a large ink drawing by our friend Larry Bob Philips. It is a really psychedelic black and white drawing, dense with a lot of overlapping imagery, you can spend a lot time with it.

How long does one of your pieces take to finish?

It is hard to say exactly, a lot of it depends on size. I usually have two or three paintings going at a time. I am a pretty fast painter, but over the years I have learned to slow down a bit and work more in layers and glazes. I would guess it takes me a good solid month or two to finish a 4 by 5 foot painting. Because I teach I am able to work about five or six hours a day through the week. If I have a show coming up I tend to work longer stretches and paint a bit faster.



Duel oil on canvas 47"x84"

Explain your process.

My process changes from painting to painting. I usually start with an idea for a narrative or with a specific image in mind. In my last painting "Duel," everything just grew out of one idea. I had made a drawing of a woman riding a horse backwards and I found it interesting. I took some photos of my wife and found photos of a horse and pieced them together, it went through several changes before I was satisfied. I then needed a background for the image, so I looked through some photos I had taken over the summer while visiting New Mexico and found one that worked. I had been watching a lot of old Sergio Leone westerns and wanted to do a letterbox, or widescreen size painting, so I had a big, wide canvas to deal with. I decided to put a modern looking home with a pool to one side of the painting to contend with the more natural rock bluff on the other side. I felt that the woman on the horse needed a counter part, she was in white, and so I dressed the other figure in black, to play off the western duel motif. For me there are two distinct sides to the painting. The image is built in Photoshop. I do a lot of variations along the way. Often, I print out early versions and draw directly on them. Once I have a layout and image that I am satisfied with I build the canvas and get started. The painting itself is fully drawn in before paint is applied. I then create a light and dark under painting using various dark earth tones. Layers of color follow, until I am totally satisfied and it feels finished.



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