



ARTFUL TEACHING: WORK BY COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PAINTING FACULTY
Curator's Statement

The teaching profession is much in the news these days, and as this exhibition's goal is to present the work of painters teaching in Ohio's many institutions of higher education, it is maybe appropriate to begin these remarks with a paraphrase of a well-known adage: "Behind every great artist is a great teacher." Artistic talent is a gift, but raw talent is little without training and guidance. The best painters are those who have learned through their professors as well as the art of the past. One serendipitous aspect of this exhibition is the chance inclusion of two artists, one the former student of the other. It should be noted that the parameters of this exhibition were restricted to traditional painting media—oil, acrylic, tempera, or encaustic; therefore, this exhibition presents painters who work in these media alone. Like the very nature of art itself—personal expression driven by a desire to create—within these restricted painting media, the work presented here demonstrates a multitude of diverse points of view and individual motivations.

Some observations: While to some viewers, the subject matter—or lack of—encountered here may seem of primary significance, it is important to stress that for the artist, subject matter in many instances is secondary, a pretext for achieving a dialogue with the media or a way to reference a higher message. For many painters, the act of painting and the thought behind the act is in itself the real goal; subject is a means to that goal. At the same time, this is not to suggest that the subjects of these works are inconsequential. They are in fact important signs or guideposts to aspects of the artist's lives—a favorite place, person or object, an abiding love, or a reminder of a parent's occupation. Even work that is non-representational often will have a basis in everyday experienced reality. Subject matter can be a fascinating glimpse into a painter's psyche and can provide a direct link to the viewer's experience.

The artists presented in this exhibition were pleased that an exhibition of this sort was organized not merely because of the chance to have their work exhibited, but especially to acknowledge the importance of teaching art in institutions of higher learning across the state of Ohio. It is to this purpose that each one has written a succinct one- or two-sentence statement on the fascinating relationship of painting and teaching. Each of these artists is acutely aware of the importance of the profession of teaching and of the legacy they pass along to their students. Painting requires hard work, reflection, as well as passion. All three are important lessons that can be found in the works of the 12 artists presented here.

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