

Artist's Statement

Why do I paint? I do not really see things until I try to draw/paint them. I believe drawing is always a foundation of painting. Naturalistic painting is a sensual experience. All objects have individuality, texture, weight and volume; a life of their own. So called still lifes are portraits of objects where these qualities are sensed and described by the painter. Painting them larger than they are allows one to pay closer attention to them, to see them more intensely. Each canvas becomes a world for the objects which I select, compose and dramatize by arrangement and color. Paint itself has a plastic quality. It can be thick or thin, fluid or lumpy. Colors can keep their distance or flow into one another. Objects can lie flat or reach out of the canvas inviting touch. For instance, the lace in these paintings has a fascinating structure, delicate yet strong and solid. I want the painting to show that.

Whereas my still lifes are small objects in large worlds, landscapes are huge vistas confined to small worlds. Some are "plein air" but most are from photographs and memories of the views that moved me most, made me stop in my tracks and take in the sense of place, what made them unique to me. I try to create that feeling by paying less attention to the object and more to space, atmosphere and invented color. Painting is a way of caressing the natural world by playing with colors, textures, forms, lines and brushstrokes. Every painting has a life of its own and can be copied but never reproduced.

Portraits of people are a privilege. It is invasive to study the ins and outs of a visage unless the intent is to flatter, but for the painter it is an objective exercise in studying the contours, volume, angles and subtle changes in color that make up that most precious of things, the human face. The result is always an interpretation by the painter of the model. Why self-portraits? I am a dependable model, always there, never offended, and can be treated with humor. Self-portraits have become a kind of diary to see myself over the years as the object and the painter.