


TOUCHSTONEGALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 5 - 30, 2011

RECENT PAINTINGS: SCAPES STEVE ALDERTON

Opening reception: Friday, October 7, 6 - 8:30pm

ARTIST STATEMENT



The two series of expressionistic paintings in this exhibition are generally referenced as “scapes.” They revolve around classic subjects; landscapes and figurescapes. In line with the standard definition of expressionism, the paintings did not stem from a complex, intellectual perspective, but rather are based in subjective emotional states.

The language across my series is fairly consistent. There are strong brushstrokes and color. Also, there’s a sense of geometric shapes; the shapes provide corrals for the strokes. The style has a reductionist quality. I strive to reduce the object to the essence of its representational self. Working with the mere essence of an image allows for easier conveyance of the sort of feelings that are the bases of my paintings. The specifics of a theme of a series typically do not emerge until after a number of paintings are completed.

A friend is fond of saying that my paintings result from emotional eruptions. For my own benefit, I’ll assume she means the works, other than being connected by a general theme, are not overly worked and conceptualized.

With the landscapes (including waterscapes and marshscapes), the series took on the look of nature as glimpsed from a fast moving vehicle or in a quick-paced dream. The result walks the line between abstraction and realism. These are not so much landscapes, as they are the idea of a landscape. A recurring image is that of a water line – perhaps because I was raised near a body of water -- at the bottom, with an often chaotic and/or moodily hued sky. In some paintings, blurry, tree-like images twist up above the horizon. These hazy reductions of natural environments offer up to the viewer an opportunity to complete the picture.



The figurescapes are expressive paintings about human feelings. The works, over time, showed themselves to be explorations of the bodily cues that depict emotional strength/visceral fortitude. They depict someone who has struggled and survived -- with a certain amount of defiance intact. This series, though more representational than the landscapes, is similarly reduced to the basics. Expressions and micro-expressions are suggested by the use of loose, bold brushstrokes -- combined with the mere tilt of a head, the slight uplift of the corner of a mouth or an eyebrow, the set of a shoulder, the quick glare of an eye, a strongly turned back, and a sternly stoic chin. The result is a portrayal of “don’t tread on me.”

(Alderton regularly exhibits at Touchstone Gallery. His work is in both private and corporate collections. Works from this series can be found on the Touchstone site under Artist/Alderton/Scapes.)

Images: “Figurescape # 20”, “Figurescape # 17” and “Figurescape # 12, Mixed Media by Steve Alderton
For more information please contact Ksenia Grishkova, Director, at 202-347-2787 or e-mail info@touchstonegallery.com

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